

GREEN SITE



Cradling Concrete's Role

BY SHELBY O. MITCHELL

While most producers know about the LEED process, few may realize that the U.S. Green Building Council's rating system isn't the only way to earn respect for environmental stewardship.

For example, Hycrete Inc., a Carlstadt, N.J.-based concrete chemical

reinforcement corrosion. When introduced, it was commonly used on bridge projects. Hycrete's engineers soon realized this durability could provide life cycle cost savings on commercial projects. Integral water-proofing also eliminates the need for extra materials, such as coatings.

But the real green benefit came from performance.

▶ **Hycrete shares its secret to sustainable success.** "When we looked

at available waterproofing materials, we saw they contained a significant percentage of high toxicity materials, increasing the negative impact of a concrete system on the environment," says Rosenberg. "We realized we could provide what customers wanted: a better, cheaper, faster, and also green waterproofing solution."

manufacturer, was honored as one of the world's most visionary companies as a 2008 Technology Pioneer at the World Economic Forum. Companies were honored for developing proven, life-changing technology with the potential for long-term impact on society. Technology Pioneers must also demonstrate a visionary leadership and be long-term market leaders.

David Rosenberg, Hycrete's CEO and president, was one of 38 leaders who attended the World Economic Forum in Switzerland in January to receive the award. The honor was based on the environmental stewardship his company has demonstrated with its water-based integral waterproofing admixture.

Hycrete is not simply jumping on the green bandwagon. The manufacturer started out in the mid-1990s to create not only a high-performance concrete corrosion inhibitor and waterproofer, but also a product that was less toxic and offered customers a sustainable solution to conventional problems.

"We want to be known as the best waterproofing company that is also green—not the other way around," says Rosenberg. "It's critical to develop with green in mind, while optimizing the system's performance."

Hycrete's concrete admixture is a key part of a system that inhibits steel

reinforcement corrosion. When introduced, it was commonly used on bridge projects. Hycrete's engineers soon realized this durability could provide life cycle cost savings on commercial projects. Integral water-proofing also eliminates the need for extra materials, such as coatings.

Cradle-to-cradle

Rosenberg has focused his green marketing on spreading the message that the waterproofing system has low toxicity. Hycrete's admixture has been certified as a "cradle-to-cradle" product by McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry. This means concrete batched with the admixture is a sustainable building product that can be safely used, recycled, and returned to the earth.

He urges companies to look into cradle-to-cradle certification, to help customers understand their products' environmental benefits, and how they qualify for sustainability credits. "The cradle-to-cradle certification has raised the visibility of our mission to create a green system of waterproofing," Rosenberg says. "It's hard for customers to understand a product's design process, but if they're using a cradle-to-cradle product, they know it has been through the ringer and met the highest environmental standards."

While sustainability has driven only a little more than 10% of their recent commercial projects, Rosenberg predicts Hycrete's green-related work will double within the next year. He also brings good news from the World Economic Forum: There is growing interest in construction's impact on the environment, which is fueling more spending on research and innovation.

"With continued innovation, more new economical products can be developed," he says. This is crucial for adopting green technology and products, since developers and owners will continue to consider price a major factor in the products they choose.

For more, visit www.hycrete.com or www.weforum.org/techpioneers/2008.

Hycrete Inc. has gained a reputation for creating dry, sustainable structures with its waterproofing concrete admixtures.

