

# **TOTAL WALL**

**ISSUE # 1003**

## **JOINT SEALANT APPLICATION AND WARRANTY CONSIDERATIONS**

In 1996, water intrusion problems on residential EIFS applications in Wilmington, NC had received national attention. The NAHB has determined that many of the water intrusion problems are due to either: 1) the absence of caulk sealant or 2) improperly applied caulk sealant. One example of an improperly applied caulk sealant is a "finger wipe" film of caulk over the seam between the EIFS and a window or door. It is important to note that no water got through the EIFS facia; it was all joint, detail, flashing and window failure.

To paraphrase Robert Thomas, author of the *EIFS Design Handbook*, sealant joints are NOT a place to scrim on EIFS design. Sealant performance is "crucial" to EIFS performance. The Wilmington situation is actual field proof of the necessity for proper caulk joints. The following is a concise summary TOTAL WALL policy regarding joint sealant application:

1. Joint sealant and related details are a crucial step in EIFS installation.
2. Joint sealant application and/or inspections are often a function of the EIFS contractor. If a separate contractor performs the joint sealant, the EIFS contractor is authorized to inspect the installation and countersign the inspection checklist.
3. All EIFS systems will be held back a 3/8" to 1/2" inch from windows, doors and other protrusions, allowing for a proper caulk sealant isolation joint. If the window or door detail does not permit an isolation joint, a triangular fillet joint using a quarter-round backer rod and caulk sealant will be used.
4. All PB, MD and PI installations will be back wrapped where the caulk sealant joint meets the EIFS. The caulk sealant should be bonded to the Base Coat rather than the Finish Coat.
5. All caulk sealant joints will use a non-absorbing backer rod.
6. The caulk sealant must be an approved sealant.
7. No TOTAL WALL Warranty is valid without proper joint installation.
8. Any deviations or changes to the standard "backer rod and caulk" system must be reviewed and approved by TOTAL WALL Technical Services prior to Warranty Approval.

The **TOTAL WALL** Technical Department