

EPDM white single-ply: Meeting market trends

White EPDMs offer attractive attributes for roofing

BY RON HEAD
Thermoplastic, FleeceBACK systems marketing manager
Carlisle SynTec Inc.

Single-ply EPDM membranes have been outstanding rooftop performers for more than 40 years. With more than 20 billion square feet installed, these membranes continue to remain the preferred roofing choice of architects and owners for low-sloped commercial roofing installations. This continued success is attributed to the many favorable characteristics of EPDM membranes, including material longevity, wide width availability, weatherability and elasticity. Membranes are lightweight, easy to maneuver on the rooftop and offer optimal reroofing as well as new roofing solutions.

Black and white—While the majority of EPDM membranes sold in the commercial roofing market today are black, there is a growing demand for white EPDM membrane roofing products. These white membranes possess the proven attributes of traditional black EPDM rubber and also meet the mandates and specifications for highly reflective cool roof systems that are becoming increasingly prevalent in today's roofing market.

Double digit market growth—One manufacturer of white EPDM membranes which also produces a white, heat weldable TPO product and black EPDM, reports its white EPDM sales are growing at double digit rates, similar to its white TPO membrane growth. This growth shows no sign of abating, as many government entities and private sector building owners are expressing a preference for light colored, energy efficient roofing products.

Functional and attractive—Highly-reflective, with an Energy Star rating, white EPDM membranes are considered to be environmentally friendly and aesthetically pleasing. In use for more than 17 years in the commercial roofing market, they have an outstanding performance record and are supported with long-term warranties.

Wide width (10' x 100') membranes offer excellent economics when compared with narrower roofing products. And, at 60-mils thick, they provide enhanced physical property characteristics with long-term weatherability, strong UV (ultraviolet) resistance and extended field performance. When applied in fully adhered applications, white EPDM sheets provide design flexibility by addressing unconventional building configurations and easily conforming to steeply sloped roof designs. FM and UL code testing have been conducted and appropriate approvals have been secured.

Adding fleece for better performance—White EPDM membranes with fleece backing are ideally suited for adhered applications in either high wind and/or hail zones, or for use over non-nailable decks. Offering enhanced wind and hail warranties, these fleece-backed membranes are offered with factory-applied adhesive tape for quick and reliable field installations. Factory-applied tape continues the evolution toward less labor-intensive field seaming, while reducing the potential for problems. Total system warranties, up to 20 years, are available with select white fleece backed membranes.

As a contractor, are you faced with either a new or reroofing opportunity where a white single-ply membrane is specified? Look first to white EPDM. It has all the strength and value-added benefits of EPDM rubber, plus white, to meet the specific needs for a highly reflective Energy Star approved cool roof system.