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ASTM adopts SPRI test method for modified bitumen using cold adhesives

Waltham, MA, August 2008—A new standard test method developed by SPRI to measure the key performance characteristics of modified bitumen systems using asphaltic cold process adhesives has been adopted by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM).

ASTM D 7379 – *Standard Test Methods for Strength of Modified Bitumen Sheet Material Laps Using Cold Process Adhesives* will be used by modified bitumen and cold process adhesive manufacturers to provide a base for establishing physical properties like cure time and bond strength. Independent testing laboratories can also use D 7379 to determine the bond strength characteristics of various combinations of asphaltic membrane and asphalt-based adhesive.

SPRI, the association representing sheet membrane and component suppliers to the commercial roofing industry, developed this test method in response to the failure of many modified bitumen/cold process adhesive systems to meet FM Global wind uplift criteria.

“The success of any roofing system is in its performance,” says SPRI member Carter Slusher of Firestone Building Products Co., who was instrumental in developing the new ASTM standard. “This test method provides a way to measure cold process adhesive systems for key performance characteristics.”

The use of cold process adhesives with modified bitumen products has increased in the last five years. This is due partly to industry concerns over the use of open flame devices like roofing torches to heat weld modified bitumen membranes in place. In recent years, insurance companies have banned the use of torches for roof construction, most notably in the City of New York.

“Application of modified bitumen products in cold process adhesives provides a technique that removes the hazard of heat welding,” says Slusher.

In addition, roofing contractors install SBS modified bitumen products using hot asphalt. The use of cold process adhesives to install SBS sheets provides a means of eliminating concerns with 450°F asphalt kettles on roofing job sites.

To purchase the ASTM D 7379 standard, visit ASTM's Web site at www.astm.org.