

Resisting earthquakes

by Diana Chiodi - Mapei Corp.

Washington University chose well in 1992 when it selected the Mapei KERALASTIC* System (KERABOND+ISOLASTIC in Europe) for covering the external walls of the H wing in porcelain tiles.

In fact, jobsite tests demonstrated that, although bonding strength was important, even more significant would have been deformability, a vital factor for long term resistance against the thermal variations that the structure would have faced in the future. After almost nine years of impeccable performance, the covering of the fronts was forced to face a test decided by Mother Nature, or more precisely an earthquake of magnitude six on the Richter scale that hit Seattle on February 28, 2001. After the event, a thorough inspection of the front did not reveal any cracks or breaking of the tiles: the exam was passed!

This was the second occasion in which a wall covering or a floor installed with the American KERALASTIC* System (KERABOND+ISOLASTIC in Europe) remained undamaged after an earthquake.

In 1989, the Sky West Airlines building in St. George, Utah, resisted to a 5.9 magnitude earthquake without any damage to its 40,000 square feet of porcelain tile front installed with the KERALASTIC* System.

According to Dave Hamilton, Mapei Corp. Product Manager, responsible for the products used in the installation of tiles and stone materials, the great advantage of a two-component deformable grout is its capability of

following the movements of tiles and their support caused by shocks or vibrations. Today, most builders promote the use of single-component, low-cost and less deformable products, even for exterior installations.

We produce our own polyurethane systems, both in powder and liquid, and the KERALASTIC* System has no rivals as far as deformability and external performance regarding ceramic and stone tiles are concerned. The KERALASTIC* System can boast over twenty years of track record, and such installation performance is positive for our industry and infuses great confidence in our customers.





** These products are realized and distributed only on the American market by Mapei Corp. (USA) and Mapei Inc. (CDN). For more information, please visit the "www.mapei.com" website.*



TECHNICAL DATA

Washington University (USA)
Project: external wall covering
Year of construction: 1992
Material installed: porcelain tiles
Mapei product: KERALASTIC
(KERABOND+ISOLASTIC in Europe)