

Water

Tribute



At the base of the San Gabriel Mountains, a tribute to water rises out of the Southern California desert in the form of a complex of four masonry buildings. Evoking waves and sails, the rippling, billowing shapes of the Cucamonga County Water District facility posed some interesting construction challenges for Contractor's Masonry of Riverside, Calif. "The roofline itself was an incredible feat," says Bruce Smith of masonry supplier Orco Block Co., also of Riverside.

Because of the roof's wavy line, "there was no point for the surveyor to pull the radius," explains Harvey Nadig, a partner at Contractor's Masonry. "It was an imaginary radius point 60 feet down in the ground." Foreman Bill Miller tackled the calculations and "they all came out right on," Nadig says.

The building envelope is constructed of solid and veneer concrete masonry units of varying colors and textures. The administrative sections of the complex are constructed of white and black shot-blast units.

Public areas feature red and black and split-faced units. Curved walls made of black shot-blast units enclose a courtyard. The units were integrally colored using high-load black and red oxides, says Smith. The red demanded twice the color load of standard red. To fabricate the white block, Orco added white cement to a special aggregate blend. The project required a total of 51,800 8-inch and 12-inch CMUs.

The colorful design created complications in keeping the walls clean during construction and making the mortar transitions from one color to the next adjacent color. Crews had to let each section dry completely before starting the next one, says Nadig. At one point the roof color bled down onto the walls, which then had to be pressure washed and brushed.

The project's finishing touches carry on the water theme. A canted, curving



limestone-clad lobby is reminiscent of a dam, and a pyramid-shaped fountain splashes onto a cobble "riverbed" that becomes green limestone as it flows through the lobby and into the courtyard.

Project Participants

Owner: Cucamonga County Water District, Cucamonga, Calif.

Architect: Williams Architects Inc., Upland, Calif.

General Contractor: The Whiting Turner Contracting Co., Irvine, Calif.

Masonry Contractor: Contractor's Masonry, Riverside, Calif.

Masonry Supplier: Orco Block Co., Riverside, Calif.



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