

WINTER 2022

# 093000 CONTRACTOR

TILE CONTRACTORS' ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA | THE VOICE OF SIGNATORY TILE/STONE CONTRACTORS



SOFI STADIUM—LATICRETE INTERNATIONAL, INC., LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

## FEATURED INSIDE

TSP Recap

Today's Tile Trends & More

Color & Design: From the Subdued to the Sublime Part III



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“Our designers travel the world and stay connected to trends to bring leading edge designs to our American artisan created collections. To support our customers, our new tile factory in Tennessee will be fully functional by Q1, 2023.”

— **Holly Badertscher,**  
*Vice President Marketing,*  
*Portobello America*

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Michael Kriss  
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## WINTER IS HERE

**H**ello, my fellow TCAA members. First and foremost, let me wish all of you Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year!

Here we are - the winter of 2022! It is very hard to predict the outcome of this winter with the COVID scare still lingering in some localities, materials lead times still lengthy, and skilled labor remaining in high demand. Winter months always move slower; days are shorter; and production is not as good.

Get ready for the arguments over job site-controlled environment, slab temperatures and humidity, and ambient temperatures. But remember, we must follow the project specification, materials manufacturers' guidance, and stand our ground. Write letters with the setting material manufacturers' and tile manufacturers' recommendations attached. After the project is completed and possible failures due to the environmental conditions on site arise, no one will remember your recommendations and demands unless you formally send them in writing. With the deadline for the project having been met, all inspections passed, and certificate of occupancy or certificate of continued occupancy issued, now the GC/CM/owner have all the time in the world to resolve problems not caused by your company or



the workmanship, but substandard job site conditions. The fighting starts with who is paying for repairs, and I hope you covered yourself sending that letter!

Just a month ago, I came back from Total Solutions Plus in Palm Springs, California. The time usage was great; the slate of speakers and topics were very factual and interesting; and technical seminars were full of extremely useful knowledge to both newcomers to the tile industry and experienced old-timers.

This TSP was exceptionally dear and close to my heart because I was asked to introduce to the audience special guests, Dmytro Kushneruk, Consul General of Ukraine in San Francisco; Sergii Voitenco, board member and past CEO of Agromat, the largest tile distributor in Ukraine; and his daughter, Katerina. Every member of the audience was mesmerized by their stories describing the war, the destruction of cities, and the suffering of the civilian population. I am proud to say that a large number of donations was collected after their speeches and throughout the rest of the TSP convention.

In conclusion, as is in my previous articles, I hope in my next article I will be celebrating the end of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and a return to Ukraine of all its occupied territories. Thank you and glory to Ukraine! 🇺🇦

## REACH OUT AND TOUCH SOMEONE



**I**n the mid-1970s, AT&T developed a very successful ad campaign using the above title to get people to make long-distance phone calls -- sort of a soft sell to play on people's emotions and have them connect with others using Ma Bell's service. Of course, today we have a plethora (Yeah, I know, that's a big word!) of

options to communicate with other people -- texts, emails, twitter, YouTube...and the list goes on and on. But for my money, I still much prefer talking to people face to face.

I have spent this fall working with the International Masonry Institute (IMI) and the International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers (IUBAC) attending architectural/contractor seminars and the special IUBAC Convention. That's also why events, such as the most recent Total Solutions Plus (TSP) conference in Indian Wells, Calif., are so important to me, especially after the barren years of human interaction due to Covid. Meeting old friends and making new ones, for me, has been a



John Trendell shakes hands with Martin Brookes, president of NTCA, at the TSP Welcome Reception in Indian Wells, Calif. Credit: Courtesy of TSP

huge part of any success I have had in this industry.

The overriding theme for me this year at TSP was people, people, people. Whether it was from the keynote speakers, the technical breakouts, or our annual TCAA meeting, the message was the same. Where and how are we going to find the people to run our organizations and to do the highly skilled work of installing more and more complex materials and projects?

Of course, there are no quick and easy solutions, but ideas were brought forth from the speakers, contractors, labor representatives, and the material manufacturers and suppliers. Education and training were the two big topics. But it was the methods of delivering these vital skills that I took away as being the most important ideas.



Engagement, mentoring, soft skills training, and quality of life issues were the new approaches I found to be the most interesting.

**Engagement:** Listening to your employees, using anonymous “stay” interviews, and finding out what is important to them rather than waiting for the inevitable “exit” interview where nobody says what they really mean.


**Mentoring:** Using your best “people-people” to work with your apprentices to teach them the skills they will need to become successful journey workers. The days of “my way or the highway” just doesn’t work anymore.

**Soft-Skills Training:** So many young people come from so many different backgrounds and cultures today. It is vitally important to teach acceptance. Proper conduct and work attitudes are to be practiced by all parties.

Quality of Life: I know the word “balance” has become a big buzzword today, but it’s true. When I was young, I would work as much overtime as I could. When I owned my own business, I worked six days a week. I don’t necessarily regret it, but I also know that today’s young people don’t necessarily feel work should be that all-encompassing.

I hope that each of us strives to be an example to as many others as possible and know that by reaching out and touching the lives of others, we can give our greatest contributions to this greatest of all industries! 🇺🇸

John Trendell  
TCAA Labor Committee Chair  
Trendell Consulting LLC



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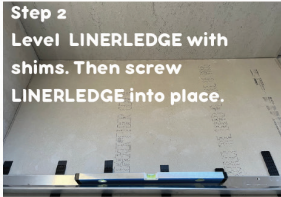
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WHAT IS LINERLEDGE?  
LINERLEDGE IS A SEMI-CURBLESS SHOWER SYSTEM FOR MUD PANS. IT'S DESIGNED TO OFFER AN AFFORDABLE, MODERN SLEEK DESIGN, WITH A PATENT PENDING WATER PROOFING LEDGE FOR THE LINER. IT'S QUICK AND EASY TO INSTALL, AND MUCH FASTER TO TILE, WITH LESS POINTS OF FAILURE. WE, AS INSTALLERS, LOVE THE SPEED AND EASE OF INSTALLATION THAT LINERLEDGE PROVIDES.

**Step 1**  
Set LINERLEDGE in place.



**Step 2**  
Level LINERLEDGE with shims. Then screw LINERLEDGE into place.



**Step 3**  
Install pan liner, tucking it under the ledge.

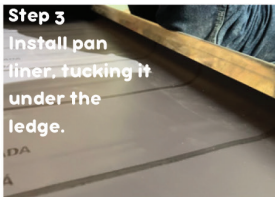





Image of proper liner installation



**Step 4**  
Install mortar bed to top of the ledge.



**Step 5**  
Install tile.



093000 CONTRACTOR

Winter 2022

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# TOTAL SOLUTIONS PLUS 2022



**If you did not attend, you missed a great event—education and fun can cohabit.**

More than 550 attendees gathered at the Hyatt Regency in Palm Springs, California, November 6-8, 2022, for Total Solutions Plus (TSP) 2022. TSP is presented by four major industry associations—Ceramic Tile Distributors Association (CTDA), National Tile Contractors Association (NTCA), Tile Contractors' Association of America (TCAA), and Tile Council of North America (TCNA). TSP is an annual conference that brings professionals from across the

ceramic tile and stone industry together to network and learn from each other, as well as the venue where decisions that impact the future of the ceramic tile/stone industry are discussed and made. Attendees understand the value of shared knowledge in an industry where methods, materials, and technology are constantly changing.

Networking, educational sessions, and keynote speakers were on the agenda at TSP '22, and it was wonderful to see old friends and colleagues and share our common interest in industry and





company development in an invigorating environment. For TCAA, the conference opened with our annual board meeting on Sunday, November 6. This was followed by a day filled with leisure, adventure, and fun. Members could choose from a golf tournament on one of Indian Wells' world-famous golf courses; a fault line jeep tour to learn about California's geology and desert wilderness on a tour of the San Andreas Fault; or a whitewater canyon hiking tour at the Whitewater Preserve between Palm Springs and Joshua Tree. After so much excitement, members welcomed the cocktail reception by the pool that evening before gathering for TCAA's annual Signatory Contractor Dinner, sponsored by IMI and the IUBAC and held at Ruth's Chris Steak House.

Monday, November 7, opened with a breakfast and keynote address by author Steve McClatchy, who challenged attendees to schedule into their workday time to accomplish personal goals.

More than simply a work/life balance, McClatchy's message was about how achieving personal goals can invigorate work productivity. This keynote was followed by breakout sessions: "Disrupting or Prompting; Does This Affect How You Approach Business?" (presented by Tom Shay); "Gauged Porcelain Tile Panels: Design Revolution with Advanced Materials, New Standards and Qualified Installers" (presented by Steve Clem); "Digital Wellness & Organization: The Most Essential Soft Skill for Success You Didn't Realize You Need," (presented by Irene Williams); and "Tiling Over Existing Tile" (presented by Jim Whitfield, Lupe Ortiz, and James Woelfel).

Monday also included the CTDA Hall of Fame Award luncheon, which honored Frank Donahue of Best Tile for his exceptional service and commitment to the tile industry and to the country throughout his thirty-plus year career. This was followed by the TCAA strategic



planning meeting and the distributors' and contractors' forums. At the end of the day, tabletop exhibits were open into the evening, and our members showed up with fantastic displays, showcasing products, materials, and expertise in manufacturing and design.

Tuesday opened with breakfast and the closing keynote address "Economic Trends, Global Trade, Labor and What's Ahead," by John Manzella and a preview of Coverings 2023, which will be held in Orlando, Florida, April 18-21. Attendees were, again, invited to breakout sessions including "Take Ownership of Leadership" (presented by Bryan Dodge); "Design and Installation Considerations for Outdoor Living Spaces" (presented by Randy Fleming and Jennifer



## **TOTAL SOLUTIONS PLUS 2023**

All contractors, manufacturers, and distributors are encouraged to plan on attending TSP 2023, October 23-24, at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside in New Orleans, Louisiana. Once you attend, you won't want to miss it! (Stay tuned for more information as it becomes available.)



Farrell); “10 Steps to Drive Your Business Exit Strategies” (presented by Patrick Morin); and “A Glimpse Into Indispensable Tile Industry Tools, Product Standards, and Green Initiatives – Update from the Tile Council of North America.”

Tuesday, attendees were invited to another award luncheon, this time for the NTCA Ring of Honor recipient, Martin Howard, executive vice president of operations of the David Allen Company in Raleigh, North Carolina. Howard is a past president of the NTCA and was previously honored as its Tile Person of the Year in 2017. The luncheon was followed by the final breakout sessions that included “Bridging the Gaps in a Multi-Generational Workforce Presented” (presented by Lisa Perez); “Recruitment Strategies to Reduce Labor

Shortages” (presented by Jim Aaron and Anthony DiPerna); and a joint industry panel discussion, “Issues Affecting Supplier and Contractor Relationships.”

The conference closed Tuesday evening with “Tile-Chella,” a dinner and dance reception with a wink at the famed Palm Springs music festival, Coachella. Guests were invited to wear their favorite festival attire as a final meal among industry friends was shared, as well as dancing, games, and plenty of good conversation and laughs.

With TSP 2022 in the books, we look forward to the next Total Solutions Plus at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside in Louisiana, October 22-24, 2023!



**Patti Smith-Connelly**  
Commercial Sales Manager of  
Portobello America (PBA)

# TODAY'S TILE TRENDS & MORE

## INTRO

We all know why ceramic tile continues to be in high demand. It looks good, is extremely durable, is easy to maintain and stands up to the tests of time. Over the years, tile has also become more and more accepted as a design element... in addition to being

acknowledged as a durable necessity. Here in the states, different style trends continue to appear on a regular basis. With so many sizes, shapes, colors, textures, and amazing surface treatments, it's not easy to cover today's tile trends in 800+ words. Here's my best shot.



Portobello's Sandwaves in Seedpearl. Credit: Portobello



Portobello Terralma in Bora Bora. Credit: Portobello



Terralma in Noronha and Bora Bora.  
Credit: Portobello

## **COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL TILE. NOT TOO MUCH DIFFERENCE TODAY.**

Ceramic tile has always been produced to perform. More and more, style is becoming a main factor for updated installations, rather than that of replacing failed or highly damaged projects. Most porcelain floor tiles are acceptable for all light traffic areas, and a good percentage of high traffic spaces. The design aesthetics are more similar in residential and commercial environments than ever before.

### **FOCUS ON WALLS**

Wall tile, which for decades has been a staple item in “wet areas” i.e., kitchens and bathrooms (where subway tile and other

rectangular-shaped products continue to appear) is becoming even more of a design element within both the residential and commercial sectors. In particular, square porcelain wall tiles are trending, now being specified for living room walls, home entryways, office lobbies, public area interiors... and so many more surfaces. And these projects may call for both very large and very tiny wall tile materials. Or even a mixture of both. Application possibilities are really up to one's imagination. In Brazil (and soon to be in our new USA factory) we believe the American market desires many options for wall tile choices... in all shapes and sizes. With the emergence of wall tile projects becoming more on-trend and designer-specified, it becomes somewhat obvious that adjacent

tile floor designs are morphing into more subtle and quieter “looks.”

### **SURFACE TREATMENTS SEEM UNBELIEVABLY REAL**

When one looks closely at the face of a tile, one may be fooled. Today, a “stone-look” tile can appear so realistic to the eye, with clearly apparent texture, that upon being touched, one is surprised that this tile actually feels flat. Conversely, a similar product can have a surface that actually has tiny pit marks, striations, and the up-down rippling characteristics of natural stone. Cutting-edge technologies, including updated inkjet printing, not only create lifelike imaging, but they also offer an incredibly strong surface treatment that protects tile faces for decades.

These amazing tools will only continue to be more mind-boggling. The result? More perfectly designed tile replicating Mother Nature’s products.

### **COLORS ARE SHIFTING**

Whereas it’s doubtful minimalistic design, which so often incorporates white, grey, and other neutral colors will ever be “out,” we are witnessing the introduction of warmer tones including rich earth tones and deep colors such as red, blue, yellow, and green. Obviously, as a tile manufacturer, it positively affects all of our clientele if we are dialed into the latest and greatest tile colors that make a strong visual statement.

Note that PBA’s wall tile line “Terralma,” (which translated... means connection of the soul to the earth) launched at Coverings



**Intermix in Cloudy.** Credit: Portobello



**Organic Clay Oceanic matte and polished custom mix.** Credit: Portobello

2022 and has an earthy color palette that is on point with today's color trends. Products such as these can only be created using tomorrow's technology.

### DESIGNERS ARE STILL DESIGNING

Regardless of the times, the vision of the American A & D community will always include trendsetting creations. From modern to rustic, large to small – they really want each project to stand out for their unique clientele. What they develop/recommend today, which may be construed too avant-garde a year later, may be accepted across the board as an industry essential. It's crucial for tile manufacturers to keep an ongoing dialog with architects and designers.

### LISTENING TO THE MARKETPLACE.

We recently hosted our first annual Product Showcase Event at the Renaissance Nashville Hotel. Entitled "Building Tomorrow Together," over 175 attendees, comprising over 60 distributorships from across the country, experienced an interactive showroom displaying the newest American tile collections from PBA. In addition to reinforcing ongoing relationships and establishing new ones, we wanted to listen to each and every guest, to find out what their clientele was looking for tile-wise and what is truly important from a service standpoint. Different regions of the country have different needs relative to tile consumption. To be a key supplier for all of our customers, it's clear that we must not only know our industry and how it's trending, but also always practice good listening skills. If we listen first, and take appropriate action thereafter, ultimately, we can best accelerate the goal set out for us by Portobello America's CEO, Luiz Felipe Lenzi Brito.



**Organic Clay in steam in a herringbone pattern.**

Credit: Portobello

His ultimate goal for us is to become "THE One-Stop Source" for every type of high-end tile produced in America for Americans, while delivering best-in-class service to our clients.

*About the author: Patti Smith-Connelly, a 25-year tile industry veteran, is Commercial Sales Manager of Portobello America (PBA). PBA is the stateside arm of The Portobello Group, Brazil's leading tile manufacturing company... and, one of the world's largest producers of tile materials. In March of next year, PBA is slated to inaugurate its brand new, state-of-the-art American-based factory, located in Baxter, TN. ■■*



SoFi Stadium's materials and finishes were selected to be world-class and extensive.  
Credit: Kayla McKenzie Photography

## LATICRETE International, Inc. • Los Angeles, California

### SoFi Stadium, Los Angeles, California—3.1-Million Square Feet

**P**erhaps nothing stimulates fervor and anticipation in America quite like cheering for one's home team. So, when a 3.1-million square foot football stadium was planned for Los Angeles, the largest stadium in NFL history, every inch had to be not just a first down, but a touchdown. Named for its sponsor, SoFi Stadium would offer premium amenities and high-tech features unparalleled in the entertainment industry, serving as an iconic and revolutionary destination worthy of the entertainment capital of the world.

Stan Kroenke, owner of the Los Angeles Rams and chairman and developer of SoFi Stadium and Hollywood Park, and his company Kroenke Sports & Entertainment, tapped Turner Construction and AECOM Hunt to oversee the ambitious endeavor. Leading the design vision, HKS, Inc.

was taken on board as the architectural firm. Designed to be situated under one monumental roof canopy, three venues would redefine entertainment and allow the site to simultaneously host various events. The stadium itself would be the first open-air, indoor-outdoor football stadium, with more than 70,000 seats, including 260 luxury suites, and the ability to expand to accommodate up to 100,000 guests. In addition, the structure would house the 2.5-acre covered outdoor American Airlines Plaza as well as a 6,000-seat performance venue YouTube theater.

The tile and stone needs of this massive powerhouse were accomplished via a three-pronged approach. Continental Marble & Tile Company, Premier Tile & Marble, and SMG Stone Company, three Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers (BAC) Signatory, California-based and family-owned installation companies, installed more than



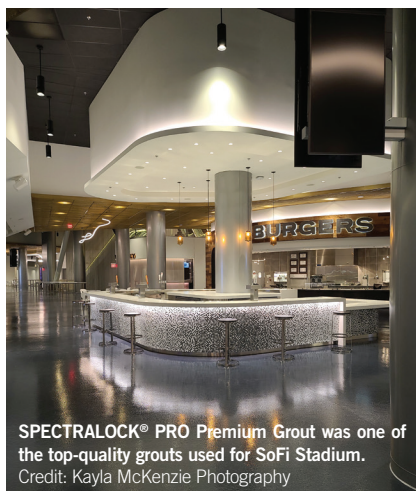


Nearly every concession stand had its own design requirements to be met. Credit: Kayla McKenzie Photography

120 different tile types with varying levels of finishes from all over the world.

### The Challenges

With so many types of tiles being installed simultaneously by three companies, the project was not without logistical challenges. Plus, the sheer amount of square footage of floor and wall materials limited mobility and required stocking tile and setting materials on multiple floors throughout the stadium. Because of multiple trade partners working in tandem with the flooring professionals, the project also required a tremendous amount of coordination and careful planning. However, among the greatest challenges was building a stadium during the height of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. Thousands of tradesmen on site daily had to adapt to new and constantly changing guidelines from OSHA, the CDC, and other governing bodies. As such, social distancing and heightened health and safety standards further complicated personnel organization.

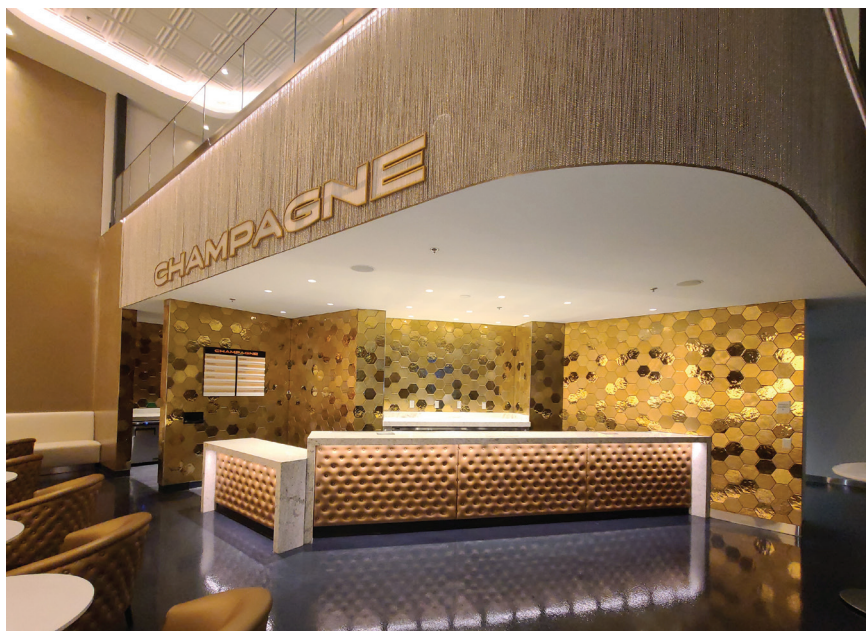


**SPECTRALOCK® PRO Premium Grout** was one of the top-quality grouts used for SoFi Stadium.

Credit: Kayla McKenzie Photography

### A LATICRETE Solution

With sizes ranging from extremely small to large format, the design effect created an extreme variation in color and aesthetic that is rarely seen. In the same fashion, each style had to be coupled with specific grout colors and types, as well as the proper setting materials. For example, the owner's club was designed to encompass a



Enhanced color consistency in customizable choices, PERMACOLOR® Grout gives the high performance and fast setting characteristics needed to provide a grout joint that is dense and hard. Credit: Kayla McKenzie Photography

higher-end aesthetic, which entailed luxury tile. Almost every concession booth on the second floor required distinct styles as well. From a whiskey and champagne bar and numerous concessions serving a variety of cuisines, to miscellaneous 360-degree bars throughout the center's walkways, each had its own design requirements to be met. Throughout the project, a variety of LATICRETE solutions provided dependability and top quality, luxe results.

LATICRETE mortars and adhesives used on this project included MULTIMAX™ Lite, a lightweight, one-step solution for large and heavy tile; LHT, a polymer-modified mortar that provides a one-step application for large format ceramic tile, porcelain tile, marble, and stone on floors; TRI-LITE™, a lightweight, high-performance tri-purpose mortar designed for thin-bed and wall

installations; and LATAPOXY® 300 Adhesive, a chemical-resistant, epoxy adhesive that will bond to a wide variety of sound, clean surfaces.

Several top-quality grouts, such as SPECTRALOCK® PRO Premium Grout, were also selected from the LATICRETE portfolio for SoFi Stadium. A high-performance epoxy grout with excellent color uniformity, SPECTRALOCK offers durability, stain protection, and beautiful, full grout joints in an easy-to-use, non-sag formula. Also from the SPECTRALOCK family, SPECTRALOCK 2000 IG filled the space as a chemical-resistant, industrial-grade epoxy grout.

Offering enhanced color consistency in customizable choices, PERMACOLOR® Grout gave the high-performance and fast-setting characteristics needed to provide



"Our installers find LATICRETE materials to be user-friendly, and their tech support and field representatives are readily available and super helpful," says Cam Ghojeh, Construction Manager for SMG Stone Company. Credit: Kayla McKenzie Photography


a grout joint that is dense and hard. PERMACOLOR Select takes it one step further as the industry's first dispensable dry pigment solution, offering design flexibility and making it ideal for the various color needs of a monumental venue like SoFi Stadium.

Besides grouts and adhesives, HYDRO BAN® provided a single-component, self-curing liquid rubber polymer, a perfect choice for bathrooms and locker rooms, thanks to its flexible, seamless waterproofing membrane that bonds directly to a wide variety of substrates. LATASIL™ sealant was used at movement joints, and Premium Acrylic Caulk was used for joints to other adjacent surfaces. STONETECH® BulletProof® Sealer was also employed throughout the project. As a water-based penetrating sealer, it provides maximum stain and antimicrobial

product protection while preserving the natural look of the surface. It can be used as a grout sealer, tile sealer, masonry sealer and in many other applications that require premium performance on the most porous interior and exterior installations.

### Outcome

Now in its third season of the NFL and having hosted the most recent Super Bowl, as well as being the selected venue for the opening and closing ceremonies of the 2028 Summer Olympics, SoFi Stadium certainly scored its anticipated touchdown...and an extra point for LATICRETE'S award-winning products.

*LATICRETE International, Inc. is a member of Tile Contractors' Association of America (TCAA). For more information about this project, please visit [www.laticrete.com](http://www.laticrete.com).* 



By Scott Conwell, **FAIA, FCSI, CDT, LEED AP**  
Director of Industry Development  
International Masonry Institute

# LET IT MOVE: EXPANSION JOINTS FOR CERAMIC TILE

**I**MI, along with other organizations in the tile industry, have made great strides in recent years, educating design professionals on the importance of movement joints for tile. Despite our best efforts, however, we occasionally encounter a set of drawings, or even worse, a completed tile project without the necessary accommodations for movement. This short article will go over some of the basic rules of movement joints in tile based on information from the EJ171 section of the Tile Council of North America (TCNA) Handbook and ANSI A108 standards. Note that this article is not meant to be a

comprehensive design guide, and we refer the reader to EJ171 for more information.

## What is an expansion joint?

The term “movement joint” is a general term used by ASTM, ANSI, and other codes and standards to refer to any type of joint that allows building assemblies or materials to move. Examples of movement joints include construction joints, control joints (also known as contraction joints), isolation joints, and expansion joints.

Building materials move over time in various ways. For example, concrete is prone to

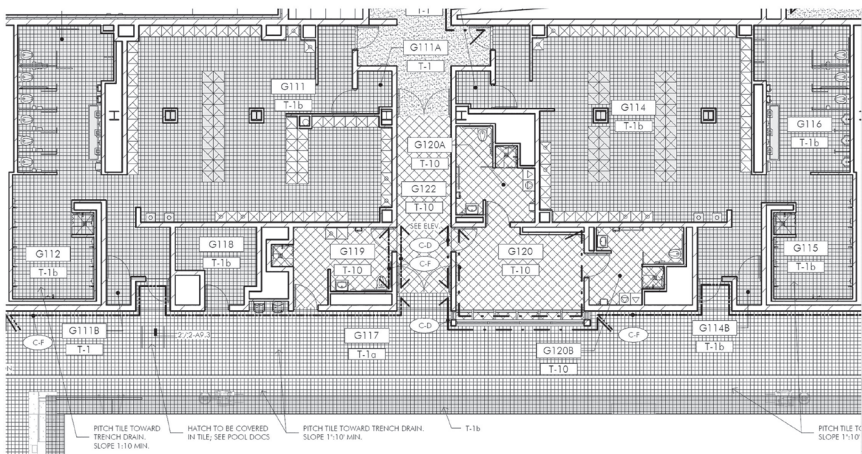


Figure 1. An architect issued this floor plan showing locker rooms and a swimming pool deck without indicating locations of the tile expansion joints.

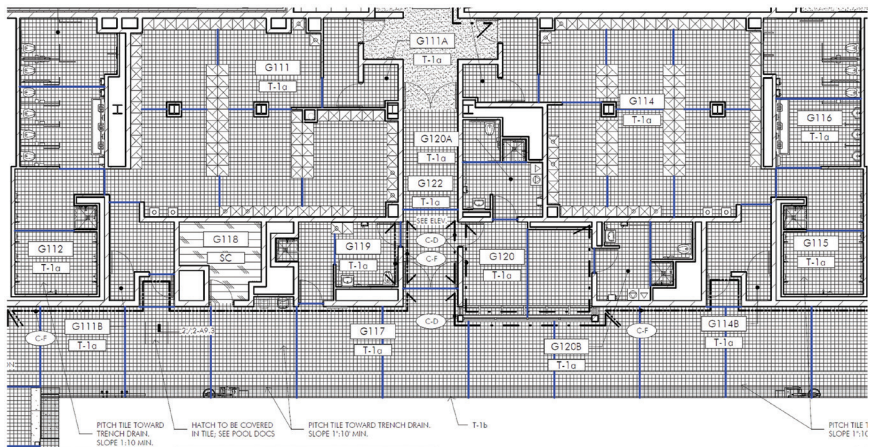


Figure 2. In response to the tile contractor's request for information (RFI), the architect designed and located expansion joints in the ceramic tile assembly, shown in blue.

shrinkage because it is a cementitious material. Placing control joints in concrete is a means to control and direct the cracking caused by shrinkage. On the other hand, ceramic and porcelain tiles made from clay, feldspar, and sand tend to move the opposite direction. Tiles typically expand due to thermal and moisture changes. For this reason, tile assemblies require expansion joints.

When referring to the soft joints in a tile assembly that allow movement of the tile, the term "movement joint" is an appropriate general term, and the term "expansion joint" is also correct, since it accurately describes the type of movement it is designed to allow. However, the term "control joint" should not be used for ceramic tile assemblies, as this term is reserved for materials that shrink rather than expand.

### Whose responsibility is it to locate and design expansion joints?

EJ171 provides guidelines on where and how frequently expansion joints should occur, but it places the responsibility of EJ design squarely on the design professional:

"Because of the limitless conditions and structural systems on which tile can be installed, the design professional or engineer shall show the specific locations and details of movement joints on the project drawings."

The design professional is the member of the project team identified in the contract documents as the party responsible for the design. They are often a licensed architect or licensed professional engineer.

If a tile contractor receives a set of architectural plans without any indication of expansion joints, they should request that the general contractor or construction manager provide this information on behalf of the design professional. If the tile contractor is asked for guidance on locating expansion joints, they may refer the GC or the design professional to the EJ171 section of the TCNA Handbook or refer them to the International Masonry Institute for assistance. The tile contractor should not take responsibility for deciding where expansion joints should be placed. See Figures 1 and 2.

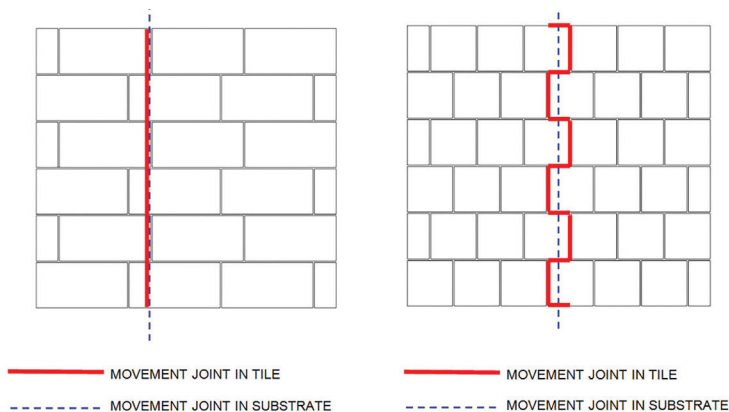


Figure 3. Expansion joints must be provided in all tile walls and floors. When the tile is installed in an offset-bond pattern, some tiles that flank the expansion joint will need to be cut. Alternatively, the expansion joint may be toothed to accommodate movement.

On small residential projects without a design professional, the tile contractor should inform the owner of the potential for movement and cracking and should place expansion joints in the tile per TCNA recommendations.

### Where do movement joints go?

The TCNA Handbook contains general recommendations for spacing of EJs as well as special conditions that require EJs. According to EJ171, EJs should be placed at a maximum of 25 feet horizontally and vertically on interiors, and at 8 to 12 feet maximum on exteriors and interiors exposed to direct sunlight. The Handbook also recommends EJs at all changes of plane where tile work abuts restraining surfaces such as perimeter walls, dissimilar floor finishes, curbs, and columns. These perimeter expansion joints are sometimes overlooked by design professionals, and cracking of grout joints, buckling of tile, or even cracking of tile, can result. See figure 3.

### Expansion joints are ugly... can we just leave them out?

Some design professionals object to the appearance of EJs, particularly in the case of an

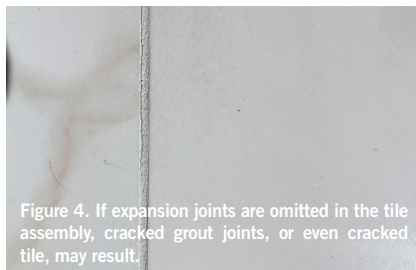


Figure 4. If expansion joints are omitted in the tile assembly, cracked grout joints, or even cracked tile, may result.

offset bonding pattern, and they prefer to omit them from the tile assembly. When avoiding cracked tile is a priority, it is preferable to install expansion joints even if it means cutting the tiles that fall in line with the expansion joint. Alternatively, expansion joints may be toothed around the tiles in an offset-bond pattern (see Figure 3), following the lines of the grout joints, but with sealant used in lieu of grout to allow for movement.

### Conclusion

Like all other building materials, tile is prone to movement. With an informed design approach calling for expansion joints and a reputable TCAA tile contractor, there is no reason we can't expect our tile floors and walls to be beautiful, long-lasting, and free of cracks. ■

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#### PART THREE

**B**y the time the Panama-California Exposition closed on January 1, 1917, the brilliantly colored tiles produced at **California China Products Company** (CCPCo) for both the California State Building in Balboa Park and the Santa Fe Railway depot in San Diego had left their indelible mark on the architectural and design communities throughout the state and beyond. In anticipation of the United States' inevitable entry into the war in Europe and with many of the raw materials needed to produce the tiles unavailable, **Walter Nordhoff**, CCPCo's founder and president, made the decision to close the tile works. In September of 1916 he hired **Rufus Keeler**, a young ceramist who had been previously engaged to decommission a similar sized plant in



Northern California, to assist in the closure while Nordhoff sought a future destination for his tile making equipment.

Stepping back in time to 1912, **William Wade** from J. & W. Wade & Co. in Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, England, established an American branch on a five-



Front and back of a West Coast Tile Co (WCT) tile, 1914-1917.





Marked "West Coast Tile Co" dates the tile to 1914-1917.



acre plot at the corner of East 52nd and Alameda Streets in Vernon, California south of downtown Los Angeles adjacent to a spur of the Southern Pacific Railroad. With the support of the family's business, along with invested capital of \$500,000, **Wade Encaustic Tile Company** was established with its factory called **Ramona Tile Works**. With little competition, the company did remarkably well in the commercial arena where a building boom was just getting underway. Tragically, in late February 1914, William Wade, while crossing the street, was hit by a passing car and within a few days succumbed to his injuries. Production at the factory, however, continued.

In October of 1914 the Wade Encaustic Tile Company petitioned for a name change to **West Coast Tile Company**, a result of

a change in ownership, as **Herbert and George Pelton** had purchased the Wade operation. By this time, the Wade product line dominated the white tile market in commercial construction in Los Angeles County and well beyond. Two years later, an opportunity arose when California China Products Company in National City was seeking a way out of the tile business. Despite the scarcity of materials at that time, the potential for adding decorative faience tiles to an otherwise artless product line provided an irresistible incentive for the Pelton brothers. A deal was struck with Nordhoff and the consolidation occurred in 1917.

True to his mission, Rufus Keeler was the person responsible for dismantling the production equipment at National City and transporting it along with the molds for the



West Coast Tile marked "Kaospar" dates the tile to 1917-1918.

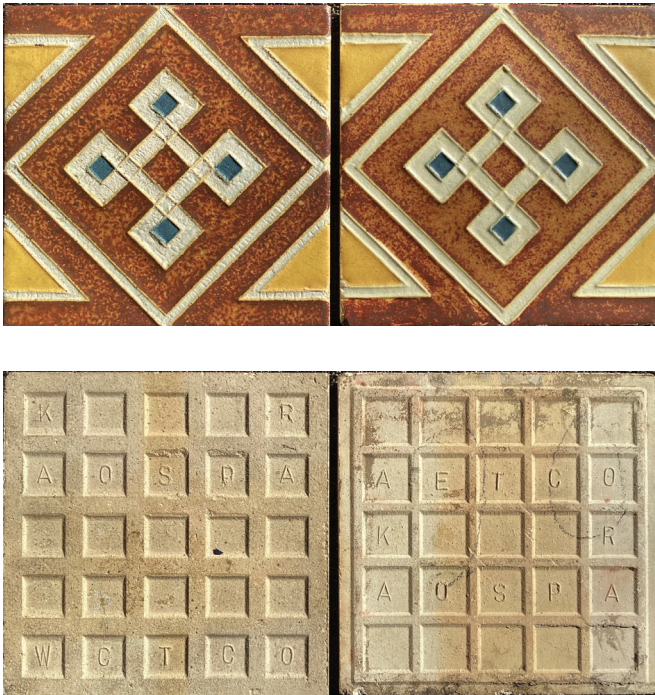
popular “Kaospar” faience tiles to West Coast Tile in Vernon. In doing so, Keeler recognized that warehouse space was available just east of the tile factory on E. 52nd Street where he set up his own pottery, **Southern California Clay Products Company**. He made chemical stoneware, vats and containers that he sold to chemical companies in the area. Although his operation remained small, he was one of the few suppliers of such material; and as a result, his business did very well.

Meanwhile, West Coast Tile was thriving, manufacturing wall tile, trim, ceramic mosaics as well as floor tiles. The only local competition was Los Angeles Pressed Brick Co., which specialized in architectural terra cotta, and Batchelder Tile Co. in Pasadena with its handcrafted ware. By 1919 with

the World War a part of history and with prospects brightened for future residential and commercial development at home, the time was ripe for a major takeover. The American Encaustic Tiling Company in Zanesville, Ohio, already well established nationally, made its move and purchased West Coast Tile from the Peltons.

Special thanks to historian Steve Soukup for sharing images from his collection and for his thorough research: “The California Collector” column in “Flash Point,” the News Bulletin of the Tile Heritage Foundation, Vol. 9, No. 4, October 1996. ■

Joseph A. Taylor  
*President, Tile Heritage Foundation*  
*TCAA's 2003 Cesery Award Recipient*  
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Above: West Coast Tile “Kaospar” 1917-1918. Below: American Encaustic Tiling Co. “Kaospar” 1919 - mid-1920s.

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