

From...

concept

to

construction

to

completion



Hilton Austin

Austin, Texas

This project was originally designed for EIFS, but upgrades in the wind load requirements to 70mph eliminated the potential use of Styrofoam. Weight became a consideration since the footings, which were already installed, were designed for a light building. Glass, pre-cast concrete and AAC were all considered as replacements. AAC was chosen for its light weight, speed of installation and excellent stucco adhesion. Acoustical and thermal insulation and fire resistance were just bonuses.

The 2" thick AAC panels had never been tested for windblown rain, so complete wall sections were assembled in Miami for testing. The walls not only passed the 70mph requirement, but also stood up to 140mph wind-driven rain, the limit of the testing center's capacity. At 140mph the 4" steel studs were beginning to buckle, but the 2" AAC panels experienced no failures.

Installation costs were reduced by assembly on the ground. Panels were bolted onto the steel studs, stucco applied, and then the whole wall sections were hoisted into place with a crane. This method eliminated the need to scaffold the entire 32-story building. Keeping workers on the ground reduced labor and insurance rates and sped up construction.



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