

3M VHB Tape Makes Its U.S. Debut for Exterior Curtain Wall Glazing

Proven on Thousands of Buildings World-Wide, Acrylic Foam Adhesive Eliminates Curing Time and Waste Disposal Issues, Improves Sightlines

A synagogue, a church, and a community services building, all in the New York City borough of Brooklyn, soon will share a distinction: they are the first structures in the United States to employ 3M's breakthrough acrylic foam adhesive, 3M VHB Structural Glazing Tape, for exterior curtain wall glazing.

Already used for this application in thousands of buildings in Asia, Europe and South America, 3M VHB Structural Glazing Tape is an alternative to structural silicone for glazing. Unlike silicone, it requires no curing time, saving weeks of delay and precluding the requirement for costly curing-time space. It also needs no spacer tape, further simplifying and shortening the assembly process.

Moreover, because 3M VHB Structural Glazing Tape serves as both the adhesive and a secondary weather sealant, it reduces waste and clean-up at the application site.

"For these and other reasons, including clean, unimpaired sightlines and the energy-absorbing nature of the acrylic foam, which reduces stress at the bonding line, we feel that the tape is ready to make an impact on the U.S. market," says Mark Jennings, 3M's Market Development Manager. "It has certainly proven itself around the world."

3M VHB Tape already has received its first application for interior curtain wall glazing in the U.S., having been chosen for the recent remodeling of the Liberty Memorial in Kansas City, Missouri. The Memorial includes the new National World War One Museum, situated underground and encircled by a dramatic glass-drum wall, 300 feet in diameter. 3M's acrylic foam tape was selected for the glazing because of its ability to deliver crisp sightlines and maintain the "invisibility" of the structure holding the glass.

In its first U.S. exterior curtain wall glazing applications, 3M VHB Structural Glazing Tape has been used on a new five-story structure on 38th Street in the Boro Park section of Brooklyn – a building developed by the Jewish community services organization Yeled V'Yalda – which will provide medical and educational services there and use the property as its administrative home. In addition, a few miles away, in the Williamsburg community, the tape is in use on the 18-foot-high arched windows of a new synagogue nearing completion. And Brooklyn's Salem Missionary Baptist Church is scheduled to remodel shortly with 3M VHB Structural Glazing Tape for its windows.

In each case, the impetus for using the tape is coming from the Brooklyn-based window company, Westside Windows & Doors, which is importing the glass and specially made aluminum frames from Israel, one of the many countries where the acrylic foam is commonly used for glazing.

"From our perspective and our experience, there is every reason to bring this product to the U.S. market," says Harold Lapa, president of Westside. "It has proven itself for years, not only for strength and reliability but also for simplicity and cost-effectiveness. In a majority of circumstances, there is no longer any need to work with silicon, and its time-consuming requirements and waste disposal issues."

3M VHB Tape, first introduced for curtain wall attachment applications in the late 1980s and then extended to

curtain wall glazing in the early '90s, is a result of 3M's long history of innovation and leadership in bonding and adhesive technology. 3M scientists invented removable masking tape and clear cellophane tape in the 1920s, and in the decades since extended the technology of bonding to encompass everything from Post-it Notes to aircraft manufacturing.

Major buildings around the world using 3M VHB Structural Glazing Tape include: The Philips Headquarters building in Hamburg; Iguatemi Corporate Center in Porto Alegre, Brazil; Moevenpick Hotel in Frankfurt; Tenerife Hotel in Sao Paulo; the new Athenee Tower in Bangkok; and the spectacular Five Boats office complex at the harbor of Duisburg, Germany.

In addition, 3M's VHB Tape has been used for many years to bond architectural paneling in major buildings, domestically and abroad. Among them: the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, the Dearborn Center in Chicago, the Burj Al Arab and Jumeriah Beach hotels in Dubai, and Tamasek Tower in Singapore.

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