

CalStar introduces GREEN BRICK on Culpepper project

By Dave Hodges
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A restaurant construction project at the Evening Rose development marks the first use in Florida of a California company's new type of brick — a green product that has 40 percent recycled content and requires only 15 percent of the energy required to make conventional clay bricks.

CalStar Products' green brick forms part of the exterior of Another Broken Egg Café that is going up on Capital Circle Northeast just north of Mahan Drive. Evening Rose is a mixed-use development of single-family homes, townhouses and office/commercial buildings.

"We have seen huge interest in the green building community," said Thomas Pounds, CalStar's CEO, who was in Tallahassee this week to promote the product with builder Culpepper Construction Co. Inc.

The bricks are 40 percent fly ash, a material recovered from the combustion of coal for electric power generation. The ash is mainly silicon dioxide, aluminum oxide and lime.

The remaining volume of each brick is sand and iron oxide pigments produced from recycled steel. CalStar adds a proprietary mix of water and additives that cause the various compounds to cure, much like cement cures to form concrete.

Pounds said the bricks do not have to be fired in a kiln, thereby avoiding the energy expense and the carbon emissions that result. Compared to traditional clay bricks, a 100,000-brick project using CalStar's product reduces carbon dioxide emissions by 40 tons — the equivalent of taking seven cars off the road for a year, the company says. It would represent a reduction of 500 BTUs in energy consumption and keeps 70 tons of ash byproduct out of a landfill.

Based in the Silicon Valley city of Newark, CalStar's brick manufacturing facility is in Racine, Wis. "Our plant



Jeff Rivenbark, owner of Rivenbark Masonry, lays a course of bricks at the Culpepper Construction project.



just opened the beginning of this year," Pounds said. "We have been ramping up production."

And the outlook is good. While construction in general has yet to shake off the effects of the recession, the green building segment is thriving. Research firm McGraw-Hill Construction reports that the \$45 billion spent

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Masons lay brick at the Culpepper Construction project. CalStar Products' green bricks, made with 40 percent fly ash, are being used on the construction of Another Broken Egg Café at Evening Rose. The mixed-use development has made green construction a priority — building in 2007 the state's first home to earn the U.S. Green Building Council's Silver LEED certification.

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on green construction in 2009 is forecast to grow to between \$96 billion and \$140 billion by 2013.

Investors "see the same opportunity we do to reinvent the building products industry," Pounds said. "We are excited to be leading the way."

Mike Schmidt, who owns the Another Broken Egg Café in Killarney Lakes, will open the second restaurant by the end of September. It totals 4,700 square feet, about 60 percent more space than his first location.

Schmidt makes waste reduction and recycling a priority in his business. When it comes to selecting building mate-

rials, there's a perception that green products cost more. CalStar bricks, however, were about the same price.

"It's simply not the case here," he said of the cost difference. "There are cost-effective reasons to conserve and reuse materials that would normally go to waste."

Culpepper, likewise, is looking for products and building practices that reflect advances in sustainable construction. The green brick also performs well.

"We like it. It's a good-looking product. The brick has a straight face to it," said Dean Brodley, Culpepper's project manager. Masons also like the fact that the bricks lay up better and that cutting them is easier. "The absorption of the mortar is just right," he added.