



FEATURE BRIEF

FABCON PRECAST CONCRETE 101



SCHOOL IS BACK IN SESSION. In the last 9 months I've thrown a lot of content at you on the subject of precast concrete. Some of it has been pretty sophisticated. Shame on me. Let's start fresh: Welcome to Precast Concrete 101. Today we'll work to create a working understanding of this truly versatile and fascinating building method and address some common misconceptions.

Is cement the same thing as concrete? No. Think of concrete as a cake; think of cement as something approximating flour. Our particular kind of cake is comprised of about 10-12% cement.

What is precast concrete construction? Structural precast construction is defined as any structure built with prestressed, structural precast panels. The concrete panels are cast in a reusable mold or "form," cured in a controlled environment, transported to the construction site and lifted into place. A typical panel is generally 8', 10' or 12' wide and may go as high as four stories.

Why is precast a good idea? With structural precast concrete wall panels, the exterior cladding, load-bearing components, insulation and interior substrate are all engineered into a single, multi-functional and modular unit. The result is a building that goes up faster, uses less steel and delivers exceptional thermal performance.

What type of building is precast good for? Precast panels are especially efficient for large structures like distribution centers, auditoriums, manufacturing facilities, large retail operations and corporate headquarters. That said, just about any commercial building over 10,000 sq. feet is a good candidate for precast construction.

Are all precast buildings gray? Unfortunately, this is a serious misconception. Precast panels can look like brick, stone or be even textured like timbers. Exposed aggregates can be used and are available in a wide range of earthy and not-so-earthy hues. Precast panels are also quite accommodating of paint, which comes in pretty much any color you can imagine.

If you're in the market for a new building or would just like to know more, visit our website...or feel free to give us a call. We keep regular office hours.