Helping School Go Green

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By RCC

When the School District of Osceola County, Fla. recently awarded a new wing addition at Pleasant Hill Elementary School, officials wanted the project to minimize its carbon footprint, while also being economically prudent and providing a safe environment for its students. Royal Concrete Concepts, Inc. (RCC), based in West Palm Beach, Fla., is providing one of the key green components. RCC's patented, award-winning transportable tilt-wall system is energy-efficient, sustainable, hurricane-resistant and designed for quick construction.

"We here at Royal Concrete Concepts believe that providing a safe, comfortable environment is essential for positive learning," said John Albert, VP of business and project development.

Royal Concrete Concepts' wall panels for the 16,670-square-foot, 20-classroom addition are constructed with reinforced steel, furring strips, electrical conduit, window and door openings, and lightweight super-strength concrete. The polystyrene super-efficient insulation provides superior energy savings and lower energy costs. The walls also contribute to the USGBC's Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) certification points through their innovative design, recycled material usage and minimal waste byproducts.

Construction time is cut significantly because RCC is manufacturing the walls at their 180-acre Okeechobee manufacturing facility at the same time the general contractor, McCree General Contractors and Architects, based in Orlando, is preparing the site. The on-site setup of the walls will take approximately five to six days, compared to conventional concrete block that takes five to six weeks for this size project. Time savings not only assure the school district that taxpayer dollars are spent responsibly, but that the classrooms will be ready before the 2009-2010 school year starts.

RCC further minimizes on-site impact because the school will see less construction traffic and less construction, with minimal heavy equipment involved. Disruptions to the campus are reduced and the children are kept safer. Plus, fewer trucks traveling to and from the campus translates into reduced fossil fuel usage and fewer vehicle pollutants expelled into the atmosphere.

"RCC offers school districts sustainable alternatives at a lower overall cost compared to conventional construction. Because these buildings stand up to hurricane and tornado winds, they last much longer and therefore are more economical," Albert said.