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Comprehensive Guide to Concrete Formwork

Introduction

Concrete formwork plays a crucial role in shaping and supporting concrete structures during their construction. It provides the mold into which liquid concrete is poured and allowed to cure.

Types of Concrete Formwork

1. Formwork for Concrete Elements

- Walls: Forms for constructing vertical concrete walls
- Columns: Forms for creating cylindrical or square concrete columns
- Beams: Forms for supporting concrete beams and slabs
- Footings: Forms for creating the foundation of a structure

2. Slab Formwork for Concrete

- Flat slabs: Forms for creating flat, horizontal concrete surfaces
- Waffle slabs: Forms with a gridded pattern to create lighter and stronger slabs
- Drop panels: Forms for creating thickened areas in slabs to support higher loads

Factors for Estimating Concrete Formwork

1. Size and Shape of Concrete Structure

The area and complexity of the structure determine the amount of formwork required.

2. Type of Formwork

Different types of formwork have different costs and labor requirements.

3. Materials

Formwork can be made from various materials, such as wood, plastic, or metal, which influence its cost and durability.

Calculating Formwork Area

To calculate the area of formwork required:

- Measure the length and width of the concrete structure.
- Multiply the length by the width to obtain the surface area.
- Add the area of any openings or penetrations.

Good Concrete Formwork

Good formwork is:

- Strong and rigid to withstand the weight of concrete
- Stable and secure to prevent any movement or deformation
- Leak-free to prevent concrete leakage
- Easily removable once the concrete has cured

Formwork Quantity per Concrete Volume

The amount of formwork per cubic meter of concrete depends on the dimensions of the structure and the type of formwork used. A general rule of thumb is around 0.5 ACL SP 4 FORMWORK FOR CONCRETE 7TH EDITION VCHIRE

square meters of formwork per cubic meter of concrete.

Formwork Design Codes

The design of concrete formwork follows specific codes and standards, such as:

- American Concrete Institute (ACI) 347
- European Standard (EN) 13670

Best Formwork Materials

Common formwork materials include:

- Wood: Lightweight, durable, and easy to work with
- Plastic: Durable, lightweight, and reusable
- Metal: Strong, rigid, and suitable for complex shapes

Formwork Methods

1. Traditional Formwork

Involves building temporary structures using individual formwork panels.

2. Modular Formwork

Uses prefabricated formwork systems that can be assembled quickly.

3. Slip Formwork

Continuous casting method where the formwork moves as the concrete is poured.

Calculating Formwork Load

The load on formwork includes the weight of the concrete, any additional loads during construction, and wind loads. The load is calculated using the following formula:

Load = Density of concrete × Volume of concrete × Gravity × (Safety factor

Thumb Rule for Concrete Formwork

A rough estimate for concrete formwork is 0.5 square meters of formwork per cubic meter of concrete.

Formwork Productivity

Formwork productivity is measured in the area of formwork installed per personhour. The productivity varies depending on the type of formwork system and the experience of the workers.

Concrete Formwork Terminology

- **Standard Formwork:** Pre-engineered formwork system with standardized dimensions
- **Shuttering:** Another term for formwork
- Simple Formwork: Formwork made using common materials and methods

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