

## 20 YEARS OF THANKS



This October marked the completion of our 20th year in business. As we finish 2002, the company employs 106 talented people, has 11 projects underway, and posts revenues exceeding \$100 million. We are grateful for the many people who have allowed us the opportunities to earn their trust and confidence, and we're proud of the great country which has provided us the freedom and environment to succeed.

Working out of our original 1,000-s.f. second-floor office on Congress Avenue in 1982, our first project was Republic Plaza, a 400,000-s.f. office building and 250-car parking garage which was completed in 1985. Since then, our jobs have included a diverse mix of public and private projects ranging from schools and higher education to offices, retail, high-tech, parking structures, large site work and road projects. They have included projects for 28 private clients, eight school districts, and seven other public entities. We've completed 44 school projects, starting with Leander High School's expansion in 1987 to the \$46 million Vista Ridge High School now under construction.

Some of our highlights include facilities built in incredibly short periods of time, such as the 1,200-car parking garage built in four months for Motorola and the elementary schools built in Round Rock and Leander in less than 10 months. Perhaps more important than anything else has been the company's ability to translate impossible situations into crowning achievements, like turning over-budget projects into completed facilities that met the owners' budgets and required opening dates. Some notable examples are the beautiful Helm Fine Arts Center built for the St. Stephen's Episcopal School in 1993, and the Round Rock Stony Point High School, which opened its doors to students in the fall of 1999. Both projects required tremendous teamwork with the designers and owners to reduce costs by up to 20% while preserving scope, usability and aesthetics.

Looking ahead, we foresee a future with tremendous opportunities for a company whose focus remains on:

- Constructing quality buildings that are cost-effective to build, operate and maintain, and that are completed on time;
- Creating and maintaining a work environment where individuals enjoy their jobs and are encouraged to contribute ideas to improve what the company does;
- Obtaining, training, and leading the best construction professionals in the industry; and
- Providing the leadership committed to meeting these goals.

To everyone who has helped make these past 20 years so successful, thank you very much.

W.A. Heine, President



## WHY CM@RISK?

### Lessons Learned

One of the principle philosophies in the design construction process is maximizing the owner's expectations relative to quality, schedule and costs. How can these three elements be balanced in such a way that the owner will get the best quality in the shortest time and at the best value or cost?

Over the years, American Constructors has learned some valuable lessons that have contributed to our success. For instance, we know that the biggest impact on a project is achieved when the Construction Manager (CM) is brought on board very early in the design process. This is best done through the Construction Manager At Risk (CM@R) delivery method, which allows owners to take advantage of significant cost-saving opportunities before it's too late.

Properly administered, CM@R has proven to be one of the best methods for balancing quality, schedule and costs. As opposed to the traditional design, bid, construct process, the CM@R method encourages the development of a true "team" relationship, which results in significant savings in time and money by permitting design and construction phases to be "fast tracked" for earlier completion dates.

American Constructors has shifted from performing mostly lump sum work to over 90% of some form of negotiated or CM@R delivery method. It's part of our long and successful track record, and the result of two key factors:

1. **The Team Approach** The "team" approach requires that the lines of communication be open and the best suggestions be incorporated for the benefit of the entire team and the project. By including subcontractors and suppliers as part of the team, schedules and budgets are more accurately developed. There is less confusion, rework and stress because the collective team experience and expertise contributes to the project's overall success. Realistic expectations are established from the start, while false or erroneous expectations are simply eliminated from the program. As part of our core values and culture, American Constructors has managed our projects under this philosophy even if it was in the lump sum environment.
2. **A Change in the Law** During the latter part of the last 20 years, the law changed considerably, granting many public agencies the authority to use various forms of negotiated delivery methods, including CM@R. When the law changed, American Constructors was well positioned to capitalize on the in-house processes already in place and it allowed us to focus quite successfully on CM@R work.

Take advantage of our lessons learned through 20 successful years in the business. If you want to build your project in a fast, cost-effective manner, get your construction manager on board early. You won't regret it.

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### NEW LAURA WELCH BUSH ELEMENTARY

In August 21, 2002, the Leander Independent School District held a dedication ceremony for their newest addition, the Laura Welch Bush Elementary School, located in the Steiner Ranch Subdivision of Austin, Texas. The highlight of the ceremony was the presence of the First Lady, Laura Welch Bush.

The school was designed by Don Tew of Tew Associates, Architects, in Austin. American Constructors received substantial completion in June 2002 which was just ten short months from the construction start date.



With a total area of 95,298 square feet, the school was designed and built to support 800 students. The new school sits on 12 beautiful acres of land with surface parking surrounding the building for easy access to the entire facility.

The school features a front canopy drop-off area, 45 classrooms, library, cafeteria, service and multipurpose areas, as well as space for the arts, theater, science lab and computer departments. For the exterior, the architect chose masonry, Texas limestone, punched windows and a pitched metal roofing system, all within the Leander Independent School District's desires to have a central Texas appearance and to blend in nicely with the surrounding neighborhood.

The project was finished well within budget at \$10,267,860. The quality of work and finishes are exceptional. Despite a delay in the start of construction due to property and permitting issues, the project was completed by the original target date of June 2002. That is four months shorter than originally planned.

To accomplish this, American Constructors drew on its 20 years of experience and technical expertise. We actively worked with the architect and engineer on site grading plans, relocating the HVAC classroom units into a central mezzanine, incorporating terrazzo flooring, and designing durable, low maintenance downspout details. Through our involvement, American Constructors helped the school district save over \$500,000. During the construction itself, we utilized many of our tried and proven processes to accelerate the schedule, maintain the overall quality, achieve a zero (0) safety incident rate and meet or exceed all of the school district's expectations.

The Laura Welch Bush Elementary School exemplifies the type of project American Constructors is proud to have on its resume. It was a challenge that incorporated many of our lessons learned over the past 20 years. Our commitment, experience and determination is the standard of performance that American Constructors provides to all of its clients and all of its projects.

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## **METHANE SEEPAGE SOLUTIONS**

American Constructors California, Inc. is the Construction Manager for the 85-condo Esplanade project for Standard Pacific Homes in Playa Vista. It is located within three miles of LAX, between the bluffs of Loyola Marymount University and the environmentally sensitive Ballona Wetlands. In addition to traditional development impacts on wetland ecosystems, this property has compounded environmental issues. Methane gas (CH<sub>4</sub>) has been detected at high levels in well monitoring activities, bringing public health and safety concerns to this site.

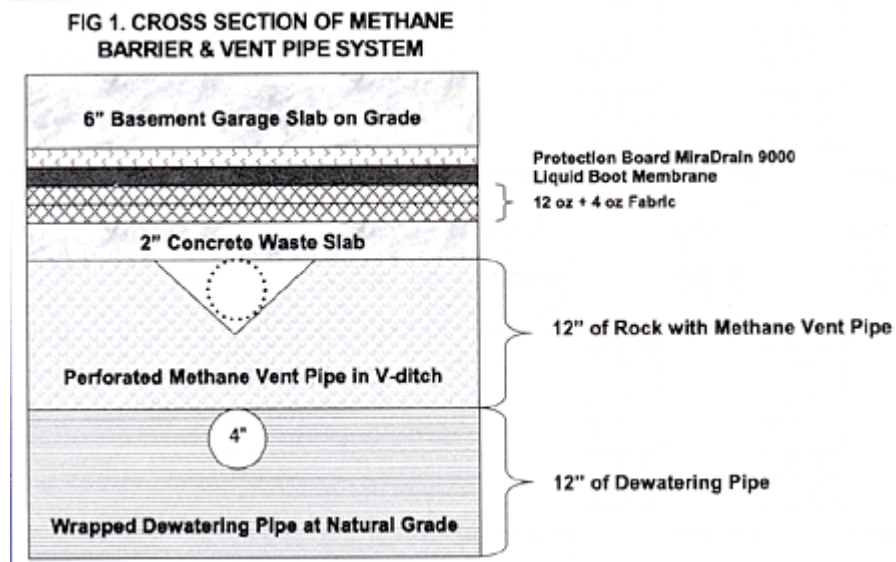
Methane gas is colorless, odor-less, highly flammable and explosive when in contact with oxygen. It can be produced by the decomposition of organic matter in waste landfills, farmlands, or swamps, and may be released by thermogenic activity of deep geologic processes.

Geologic investigations by Exploration Technologies, Inc. reported new evidence of the Lincoln Blvd fault, which would provide a direct conduit for methane gas to seep to the surface into Playa Vista. Results from a four-month study by ETI determined safe development could continue with implementation of a methane barrier and vent and monitoring systems.

Carlin Environmental designed the new methane barrier and collection/vent system. The system is comprised of a layered methane barrier under the subterranean garage foundation which is connected to eight vents extending through the rooftops. Four monitoring ports in the basement garage detect methane levels, which is reported to a monitoring panel in the common-area lobby. The panel contains an alarm system and automatic dialer to a monitoring company, which notifies the fire department if methane exceed safe levels.

The methane barrier is a layered system comprising a series of piping and a waterproofing membrane and geotextile fabric within the entire perimeter of the garage (see Fig. 1). The bottom-most layer is a 4" dewatering pipe system wrapped in geotextile

fabric to collect and drain influent groundwater into a sump that ties into city drains. Over this is a 12" layer with V-ditch to run perforated piping for methane gas collection. This second layer is covered by a 2" concrete waste slab, which is wrapped with 12-ounce and 4-ounce layers of geotextile fabric.



On top of this, the vapor barrier membrane is spray-applied with a polymer modified asphaltic emulsion liner called Liquid Boot. Under the supervision of the deputy inspector, the membrane is sprayed on to 100 mils and cured for four days. The installation then undergoes a smoke test to ensure proper vapor seal. Afterward, MiraDrain 9000 protection board overlays the membrane so that rebar installation can begin for the slab on grade.

The collection/ventilation system consists of a perforated pipe placed beneath the garage slab, connected to four active vents and four passive vents that extend beyond the roof. The design allows the gas that builds up beneath the slab surface to collect into the perforated pipe and exit to the atmosphere through the vents, and prevents methane from entering the building.

The detection system incorporates a series of methane sensors connected to an alarm system that alerts occupants and the fire department of the presence of flammable gas. The redundancy of the system and the multiple safety checks create a safe living environment for all occupants of the Esplanade project.

Some age-old cleaning methods are no longer part of the manufacturer's recommended procedures on today's flooring materials. Changes in the materials require updated cleaning procedures, agents, sealers, and waxes.



Make sure you've obtained the latest manufacturer recommendations to assure optimum beauty, function, and long life of your flooring.

When American Constructors completes a project we ensure that the proper operating and maintenance manuals, shop drawings, submittal literature, and training are provided to the Owner.