



LOCATING MOVEMENT JOINTS

International Masonry Institute

The James Brice House
42 East Street
Annapolis, MD 21401
phone 410.280.1305
fax 301.261.2855
toll free 800.803.0295
www.imiweb.org

Masonry Hotline

800.IMI.0988 (800.464.0988)
masonryquestions@imiweb.org

Training Hotline

800.JOBS.IMI (800.562.7464)
training@imiweb.org

While some designers state that it is construction practice for the mason contractor to place the movement joints, this is not the code mandated procedure. As far back as the 1988 MSJC Code and Specification, this responsibility was placed on the designer and continues in the current edition of the MSJC documents.

The Masonry Standards Joint Committee (MSJC) Code and Specification provisions are written by a Committee of designers, academics, producers, contractors, code officials and other professionals who follow rigorous balloting and review requirements of all three sponsoring organizations – The Masonry Society (TMS), American Concrete Institute (ACI), and American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). In addition to the sponsoring organization technical review procedures, draft documents are sent out for public comment to solicit input from the public as a whole. The result is a document that is an American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accredited standard referenced in the International Building Code (IBC) and International Residential Code (IRC).

The 2008 MSJC Code includes the following requirement in Section 1.2.2 (h):

*1.2.2 Show all Code-required drawing items on the project drawings, including:
(h) Provision for dimensional changes resulting from elastic deformation, creep, shrinkage, temperature, and moisture.*

In addition, the 2008 MSJC Specification Mandatory Requirements Checklist in Article 3.3 F.7. 'Movement Joints' in the Notes to the Architect/Engineer directs:

Indicate type and location of movement joints on the project drawings.

Movement joints for masonry construction include:

- Expansion joints for brick, stone, calcium silicate and other similar materials,
- Control joints for concrete masonry units, cast stone, Autoclaved Aerated Concrete and other Portland cement based products,
- Building expansion joints,
- Isolation joints,
- And possibly other movement joints as required by the design.

Proper movement joint location can differ based on whether the masonry is a veneer or a structural wall. Location of the joint can impact the structural and aesthetic performance of the building. As such, locating the joint is a design responsibility and is so mandated by the MSJC. By locating the joints on the project drawing, the designer not only is meeting code requirements, but their design assumptions and requirements are communicated to the mason contractor for proper installation.