

Case Study: Curtain Call — Asphalt Anchors Provide Smooth Sailing in Florida

Asphalt Anchors solves storage problem for exotic lumber yard

Universal Building Specialties (USB) has supplied retail lumber and timber to customers worldwide for nearly 55 years. Based in Auburnville, Florida, USB is the largest solid-sawn structural timber stocking distributor in the southeast U.S. and is renowned for architectural hard wood lumber grades of western red cedar, cypress, douglas fir, ipe and other tropical exotics.

Some of the products UBS handles are very long timbers. Planks and sheets longer than 16 feet are not unusual. In order to handle and store such large timbers, a very large structure is required. But conventional fixed-wall buildings would limit the ability of the yard to move planks in and out of the structure. On the other hand, leaving the precious wood subject to the elements is not an option.

The solution, used by yards like this one around the country, is to build an open wall structure, and utilize heavy plastic curtains as walls. This allows both easy access and weather protection.

According to Peter Gilbert, UBS Vice President of Operations, the company erected a 185-foot long by 40-foot deep by 18-foot high building, with tarp curtains that run on a track above. The curtains, however, are like large boat sails. The slightest wind applies huge forces on the tarps and causes them to billow, unless they are anchored into the ground.

USB built the structure on a section of the asphalt paved parking lot. The challenge was finding a product that could be installed directly into the asphalt with enough strength to hold the curtains in place. But the high winds in Florida were making this a weighty task. They tried driving lag bolts into the ground, but that didn't work. Then they considered digging a trench that would be filled with concrete, but the cost was a deterrent. Then, Gilbert learned of a new type of anchor – one that would keep his sail-like curtains from blowing away. He contacted Asphalt Anchors.

Asphalt Anchors Group of Designated Parking Inc. developed the BoltHold line of asphalt anchors.

"The strength of this product was most impressive and held the curtains in place even with the Florida winds," Gilbert said. "I was pleased to find a product that had the strength in the asphalt and for a fraction of the cost of pouring concrete."



Asphalt Anchors products provided an economical solution to a windy problem for United Building Specialties of Auburnville, Florida. The anchoring system effectively anchored tarp walls to an asphalt lot for a temporary building to protect exotic lumber species from the harsh Florida elements.

These specially designed asphalt anchors overcome the asphalt's weakness in two ways — they are unusually long and they bond with a hard grout that fills the crevices in the asphalt and the gravel below it to distribute the forces over a large area.

Originally designed to safely and securely hold in Designated Parking's signature parking barriers, Universal Building Services is among the many companies to find another unique and creative use for the devices.

Pete Gilbert says that just like the UBS goals of finding specialties for their customers, Designated Parking's Asphalt Anchors was a creative solution to a frustrating problem. He urges others replacing asphalt with concrete to strongly consider these anchors as a cost-effective option.

"This product has the strength of lagging in concrete at a reduced cost. I believe the applications are endless and can replace a lot of concrete needed projects," Gilbert said. "It's really great to find a

product that I wasn't aware of prior to solve a very frustrating problem. I just hope that the word gets out on the quality of this product and the many applications it can be used for."

Asphalt Anchors Group (www.asphaltanchors.com) developed its first asphalt anchors when the parent company, Designated Parking Corp. (www.designatedparking.com) needed a method of mounting its car parking barriers to asphalt driveways and parking lots in 2004. AAG is a member of the Specialty Tools and Fasteners Distributors Association (STAFDA).

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