Guide for Design and Construction with Autoclaved Aerated Concrete Panels

Reported by ACI Committee 526
Guide for Design and Construction with Autoclaved Aerated Concrete Panels

Copyright by the American Concrete Institute, Farmington Hills, MI. All rights reserved. This material may not be reproduced or copied, in whole or part, in any printed, mechanical, electronic, film, or other distribution and storage media, without the written consent of ACI.

The technical committees responsible for ACI committee reports and standards strive to avoid ambiguities, omissions, and errors in these documents. In spite of these efforts, the users of ACI documents occasionally find information or requirements that may be subject to more than one interpretation or may be incomplete or incorrect. Users who have suggestions for the improvement of ACI documents are requested to contact ACI via the errata website at http://concrete.org/Publications/DocumentErrata.aspx. Proper use of this document includes periodically checking for errata for the most up-to-date revisions.

ACI committee documents are intended for the use of individuals who are competent to evaluate the significance and limitations of its content and recommendations and who will accept responsibility for the application of the material it contains. Individuals who use this publication in any way assume all risk and accept total responsibility for the application and use of this information.

All information in this publication is provided “as is” without warranty of any kind, either express or implied, including but not limited to, the implied warranties of merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose or non-infringement.

ACI and its members disclaim liability for damages of any kind, including any special, indirect, incidental, or consequential damages, including without limitation, lost revenues or lost profits, which may result from the use of this publication.

It is the responsibility of the user of this document to establish health and safety practices appropriate to the specific circumstances involved with its use. ACI does not make any representations with regard to health and safety issues and the use of this document. The user must determine the applicability of all regulatory limitations before applying the document and must comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including but not limited to, United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) health and safety standards.

Participation by governmental representatives in the work of the American Concrete Institute and in the development of Institute standards does not constitute governmental endorsement of ACI or the standards that it develops.

Order information: ACI documents are available in print, by download, through electronic subscription, or reprint, and may be obtained by contacting ACI.

ACI codes, specifications, and practices are made available in the ACI Collection of Concrete Codes, Specifications, and Practices. The online subscription to the ACI Collection is always updated, and includes current and historical versions of ACI’s codes and specifications (in both inch-pound and SI units) plus new titles as they are published. The ACI Collection is also available as an eight-volume set of books and a USB drive.

American Concrete Institute
38800 Country Club Drive
Farmington Hills, MI 48331
Phone: +1.248.848.3700
Fax: +1.248.848.3701

www.concrete.org
Guide for Design and Construction with Autoclaved Aerated Concrete Panels

Reported by ACI Committee 526

Jennifer E. Tanner*, Chair
Felipe Babbitt, Secretary

Manuel Diaz
Fouad H. Fouad
Ralph D. Gruber
Keith Itzler*
Konstantin Sobolev

Consulting Members
Michael McDonough
Bruce Weems

*Primary authors.

Special acknowledgments to Alaa Abd Ali and Greg Mueller for their contributions to this guide.

This guide is intended for use by architects, engineers, contractors, building officials, and manufacturers. Its purpose is to present, in a single source, information that can help those individuals design, specify, and construct with factory-reinforced panels of autoclaved aerated concrete (AAC). In this guide, introductory information on AAC is first presented, followed by a description of its manufacture, guidance on structural design using reinforced panels, and guidance on construction with such panels. The body of this guide ends with an extensive background chapter on the material characteristics of AAC and the structural behavior and design of AAC elements.

Keywords: autoclaved aerated concrete; design; sustainability; shear wall.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1—INTRODUCTION, p. 2
1.1—Introduction, p. 2
1.2—Historical background of AAC, p. 2
1.3—Scope and objectives of this guide, p. 2

CHAPTER 2—NOTATION AND DEFINITIONS, p. 3
2.1—Notation, p. 3
2.2—Definitions, p. 3

CHAPTER 3—TYPICAL MATERIAL AND THERMAL CHARACTERISTICS AND MANUFACTURE OF AAC, p. 4
3.1—Materials used in manufacturing of AAC, p. 4
3.2—Typical mechanical and thermal characteristics of AAC, p. 4
3.3—Thermal considerations, p. 4
3.4—Manufacture of AAC, p. 6
3.5—Typical dimensions of AAC units, p. 7
3.6—Dimensional tolerances, p. 8
3.7—Identification and marking of AAC units, p. 8

CHAPTER 4—STRUCTURAL DESIGN OF REINFORCED AAC PANELS, p. 8
4.1—Applications of AAC panels, p. 8
4.2—Overview of proposed design provisions for reinforced AAC panels, p. 8

CHAPTER 5—HANDLING, ERECTION, AND CONSTRUCTION WITH AAC PANELS, p. 10
5.1—Handling of AAC panels, p. 10
5.2—Erection of AAC wall panels, p. 10

ACI Committee Reports, Guides, and Commentaries are intended for guidance in planning, designing, executing, and inspecting construction. This document is intended for the use of individuals who are competent to evaluate the significance and limitations of its content and recommendations and who will accept responsibility for the application of the material it contains. The American Concrete Institute disclaims any and all responsibility for the stated principles. The Institute shall not be liable for any loss or damage arising therefrom.

Reference to this document shall not be made in contract documents. If items found in this document are desired by the Architect/Engineer to be a part of the contract documents, they shall be restated in mandatory language for incorporation by the Architect/Engineer.
5.3—Erection of AAC floor and roof panels, p. 10
5.4—Electrical and plumbing installations in AAC, p. 11
5.5—Exterior finishes for AAC, p. 11
5.6—Interior finishes for AAC panels, p. 11

CHAPTER 6—TECHNICAL JUSTIFICATION FOR PROPOSED DESIGN PROVISIONS, p. 11

6.1—Key mechanical characteristics of AAC, p. 11
6.2—Bond strength between factory-installed wire reinforcement and AAC, p. 20
6.3—Flexural design of AAC beams, p. 22
6.4—Control of deflections, p. 23
6.5—Shear design of AAC beam elements, p. 24
6.6—Design of AAC shear walls, p. 24
6.7—Behavior of AAC panels under eccentric axial compression, p. 38
6.8—Special provisions to avoid longitudinal cracking at location of vertical reinforcement, p. 38
6.9—Design of AAC diaphragms, p. 43

CHAPTER 7—REFERENCES, p. 47

Authored documents, p. 48

APPENDIX A, p. 50

A.1—Example 1: Design of AAC floor panel, p. 50
A.2—Example 2: Design of AAC shear wall, p. 56
A.3—Example 3: Design of AAC diaphragm, p. 58
A.4—Example 4: Design of load-bearing vertical wall panel subjected to eccentric gravity and out-of-plane wind loads, p. 62
A.5—Example 2: design of AAC shear wall (metric units), p. 67

APPENDIX B—TYPICAL DESIGN DETAILS, p. 71

B.1—Cladding wall panel systems, p. 71
B.2—Load-bearing vertical wall panel systems, p. 76
B.3—Floor and roof details, p. 79

CHAPTER 1—INTRODUCTION

1.1—Introduction

Autoclaved aerated concrete (AAC) is produced as masonry type units where it can be reinforced in the field similar to conventional concrete masonry or as factory-produced panels with reinforcement installed in the factory. Reinforcement for factory-installed panels can be supplemented with reinforcing steel as the panels are assembled in the field. Because design and construction provisions already exist for AAC masonry made from masonry-type units without factory-installed reinforcement, this guide touches only briefly on AAC masonry. Provisions for the design and construction of AAC masonry can be found in TMS 402/602. This guide addresses design, specification, and construction needs for factory-reinforced panels, for which comparable design and construction provisions do not yet exist.

This guide is also intended to be used as a starting point for the development of mandatory-language design provisions, under the mandate of ACI Committee 318 or other committee so designated by ACI. To facilitate that process, the design provisions proposed in this guide, though written in nonmandatory language as required by ACI, are arranged to follow the format of ACI 318.

1.2—Historical background of AAC

AAC was first produced commercially in Sweden in 1923. Since that time, its production and use have spread to more than 40 countries in North America, Central and South America, Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and Australia. This wide experience has produced many case studies of use in different climates and under different building codes.

In the United States, modern uses of AAC began in 1990, for residential and commercial projects in the southeastern states. United States production of plain and reinforced AAC started in 1995 in the Southeast and has since spread to other parts of the country.

1.3—Scope and objectives of this guide

AAC, a form of cellular concrete, is a low-density cementitious product of calcium silicate hydrates in which the low density is obtained by the formation of macroscopic air bubbles, mainly by chemical reactions within the mass during the liquid or plastic phase. The air bubbles are uniformly distributed and are retained in the matrix on setting, hardening, and subsequent curing with high-pressure steam in an autoclave, to produce a homogeneous structure of macroscopic voids, or cells (Fig. 1.3). AAC is broken down into classes defined by the unit weight and compressive strength. Material specifications for this product are prescribed in ASTM C1693.

This guide is limited to AAC with a density of 50 lb/ft³ (800 kg/m³) or less.

The specific objectives of this guide are to:

a) Review the basic characteristics of AAC
b) Provide a brief history of structural applications of AAC
c) Review the fabrication of AAC panels
d) Recommend structural design procedures for factory-reinforced AAC panels
e) Recommend construction details for use with factory-reinforced AAC panels
GUIDE FOR DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION WITH AUTOCLAVED AERATED CONCRETE PANELS (ACI 526R-19) 3

The structural design procedures and construction details recommended herein are intended to result in AAC panels with reliable structural capacity, durability, appearance, and overall serviceability. This guide is limited to AAC with a density of 50 lb/ft\(^3\) (800 kg/m\(^3\)) or less. It is written for structural designers and addresses design using factory-reinforced AAC panels. Design of AAC masonry is also addressed in ACI 530/530.1. The specific objectives of this guide are to:

a) Review the basic characteristics of AAC
b) Provide a brief history of structural applications of AAC
c) Review the fabrication of AAC panels
d) Recommend structural design procedures for factory-reinforced AAC panels
e) Recommend construction details for use with factory-reinforced AAC panels

The structural design procedures and construction details recommended herein are intended to result in AAC panels with reliable structural capacity, durability, appearance, and overall serviceability.

Chapter 2 presents standard notation and definitions. Material and thermal characteristics and an introduction to manufacturing are addressed in Chapter 3. A general design overview is presented in Chapter 4. In Chapter 5, handling and erection of panels are addressed. Chapter 6 presents the detailed technical justification for the proposed design provisions. References are presented in Chapter 7. Appendix A provides design examples. In Appendix B, typical design details are used to introduce the reader to specific configurations of the AAC structural elements whose design and construction are addressed by this document.

CHAPTER 2—NOTATION AND DEFINITIONS

2.1—Notation

\[ A = \text{area of wall, in.}^2 (\text{mm}^2) \]

\[ A_s = \text{effective cross-sectional area of horizontal reinforcement in AAC panel, in.}^2 (\text{mm}^2) \]

\[ d = \text{distance from centroid of tension steel to fiber at maximum compressive strain (taken as 0.8} \ell_w \text{ for a shear wall), in. (mm)} \]

\[ d_{cross} = \text{diameter of cross wire in reinforced AAC panel, in. (mm)} \]

\[ d_{long} = \text{diameter of longitudinal wire in reinforced AAC panel, in. (mm)} \]

\[ E_{AAC} = \text{modulus of elasticity of AAC, psi (MPa)} \]

\[ f_{AAC} = \text{tested compressive strength of AAC, psi (MPa)} \]

\[ f'_{AAC} = \text{specified compressive strength of AAC, psi (MPa)} \]

\[ f_{bond} = \text{tensile bond strength of AAC, psi (kPa)} \]

\[ f_c = \text{tested compressive strength of concrete, psi (MPa)} \]

\[ f_g = \text{specified compressive strength of grout, psi (MPa)} \]

\[ f_r = \text{modulus of rupture of concrete, psi (kPa)} \]

\[ f_{AAC} = \text{modulus of rupture of AAC, psi (kPa)} \]

\[ f_s = \text{stress developed in horizontal reinforcement of reinforced AAC panel, psi (MPa)} \]

\[ f_t = \text{splitting tensile strength of concrete, psi (MPa)} \]

\[ f_{tAAC} = \text{splitting tensile strength of AAC, psi (MPa)} \]

\[ f_y = \text{specified yield strength of steel reinforcement, psi (MPa)} \]

\[ h_{crack} = \text{height of flexural crack in a shear wall at flexure-shear cracking, in. (mm)} \]

\[ h_{wall} = \text{height of shear wall, in. (mm)} \]

\[ L = \text{length of a beam or floor slab including the support width, in. (mm)} \]

\[ \ell_{cross} = \text{length of transverse steel in AAC panel, in. (mm)} \]

\[ \ell_w = \text{clear span of a beam or floor slab, in. (mm)} \]

\[ \ell_{w} = \text{plan length of shear wall, in. (mm)} \]

\[ M = \text{moment at the base of shear wall, kip-in. (kN-m)} \]

\[ n_{cross} = \text{number of cross wires} \]

\[ n_{long} = \text{number of longitudinal wires} \]

\[ P = \text{axial force acting on wall, kip (kN)} \]

\[ R-value = \text{thermal resistance of a wall system, h}\cdot\text{ft}^2\cdot\text{°F/Btu (m}^2\text{K/W)} \]

\[ S = \text{section modulus, in.}^3 (\text{mm}^3) \]

\[ S_{cross} = \text{center-to-center spacing of cross wires (transverse steel) in reinforced AAC panel, in. (mm)} \]

\[ s_h = \text{spacing of longitudinal wires in reinforced AAC panel, in. (mm)} \]

\[ t = \text{specified thickness of shear wall, in. (mm)} \]

\[ U-value = \text{thermal conductivity of a wall system, Btu/h-ft}^2\cdot\text{°F/W (m}^2\cdot\text{°C/W)} \]

\[ V = \text{shear at the base of shear wall, kip (kN)} \]

\[ V_{AAC} = \text{shear strength provided by autoclaved aerated concrete, kip (kN)} \]

\[ V_c = \text{shear strength provided by concrete, kip (kN)} \]

\[ V_{fr} = \text{base shear at flexural cracking capacity, kip (kN)} \]

\[ V_{ds} = \text{strength of an AAC shear wall as governed by crushing of diagonal strut, kip (kN)} \]

\[ V_n = \text{nominal shear strength of a reinforced concrete section, kip (kN)} \]

\[ V_s = \text{shear strength provided by the shear reinforcement, kip (kN)} \]

\[ V_{ss} = \text{sliding shear capacity of AAC shear wall, kip (kN)} \]

\[ w = \text{horizontal projection of the width of the diagonal strut, in. (mm)} \]

\[ e_{xy} = \text{drying shrinkage of AAC} \]

\[ \mu = \text{coefficient of friction} \]

\[ \rho_{1693} = \text{density of AAC as defined by ASTM C1693} \]

2.2—Definitions

ACI provides a comprehensive list of definitions through an online resource. Definitions provided herein complement that source.

**autoclaved aerated concrete**—cementitious product based on calcium silicate hydrates in which low density is attained by the inclusion of an agent resulting in macroscopic voids and is subjected to high-pressure steam curing.

**corrosion-inhibiting coating**—acrylic synthetic resin material manufactured specifically for coating smooth wire reinforcement embedded in factory-produced AAC panels; embedded wire cages are generally coated by dipping in the liquid coating after the cages are welded.