

WALL WASH LIGHTING ON BRICK, BLOCK & TILE

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When you look at yourself in the mirror, the right light can make a big difference.

The same thing happens to masonry walls—brick, block, stone or tile—when unflattering, wall wash lighting is mounted directly on it.

Masonry is manufactured from raw materials drawn from the earth. The wonderful tones, hues and depth inherent in brick, block, stone, tile and marble come from their beginnings as natural materials. These raw materials also produce some variation in unit size. Product standards include tolerances for the units and tiles that result in pleasing finished surfaces when viewed “under diffuse lighting.” In fact, most standards use those exact words to describe the finished product.

Wall Wash Lighting Tip

Wall wash lighting magnifies the effect of natural variation in materials. These manufacturing tolerances are allowable by standard. Try reviewing walls with direct and diffused light to see the difference.

In addition to product variations, consider that the craftworker likely installed the units under less-than-adequate lighting conditions on the job site. In that case, there is an even bigger factor—the substrate—that affects the finished surface. If the backup is not level or even, the finished masonry surface can only mirror that. When wall wash lighting is added, any small irregularities are magnified and shadow lines are created artificially.

So it isn't the workmanship, it's the lighting!