

er, the company began catering to building owners and architects as well.

Working with proprietary, water-based, multipolymer stains, the company's "masonry artists" use a variety of hand-application techniques to change the appearance of masonry in place. The pigments are absorbed into the pores of the masonry units or mortar to make a color change that lasts indefinitely but can be altered by further application of stain.

### Case history

On one recent residential job, the brick was to have an overall red base with range brick of white, grayish-tan, and black. The brick was delivered and laid; however, it lacked enough of the range colors, so many areas were almost completely red.

The coloring crew mixed quantities of the three range colors

and set to work. After experimenting to find the correct colors and application techniques, they stained selected brick to match the desired color range and distribution. The work was completed in 1 day at a cost of about \$800. According to a company representative, their work generally costs about 1/3 the cost of replacing masonry in a wall.

### Porosity and texture are important

The process is said not to be limited by the degree of color change needed. Masonry can be stained from light to dark, dark to light, or to a different hue of the same value.

Limitations do exist, however, based on the porosity and density of the masonry. Very hard, smooth brick do not accept the color as well as more porous materials. The work also is limited by varia-

tions in texture. Bark- or other rough-textured brick cannot be made to appear the same as a smoother material, even if their colors are identical.

Company vice president Peter Woodworth says the company maintains 100% customer satisfaction by making clear to prospective customers what results they can expect. "Once we feel the customer has a realistic view of what we can achieve, we do whatever it takes to make that happen," says Woodworth. "Sometimes it's more work than we initially expect, sometimes it's less. As our crews gain experience, though, they become more aware of what they can do and how to do it efficiently."

Two-person crews travel in vans equipped with about a dozen common colors premixed, plus bases and pigments to mix unusual shades. They carry brush-



Too few range brick were delivered and installed, resulting in an uneven and unacceptable appearance.



"Masonry artists" apply water-based, multipolymer stain and create the desired color blend.