

KEEPING THE BOAT AFLOAT

Acclaimed renovator calls on HydroGap for moisture management in unique Bay Area houseboat community

PRODUCTS FEATURED: HydroGap Drainable Housewrap



Introduction

The San Francisco area's tidal bay, adjacent to the Pacific Ocean, is home to some of the country's most challenging weather. The bay front village of Sausalito, California endures nightly fog, high humidity and occasional wind-blown rain that can hit buildings sideways. Preventing moisture from accumulating inside buildings and underneath windows, roofs and even siding panels is a challenging task – builders must understand how to effectively manage moisture and which building products to use.



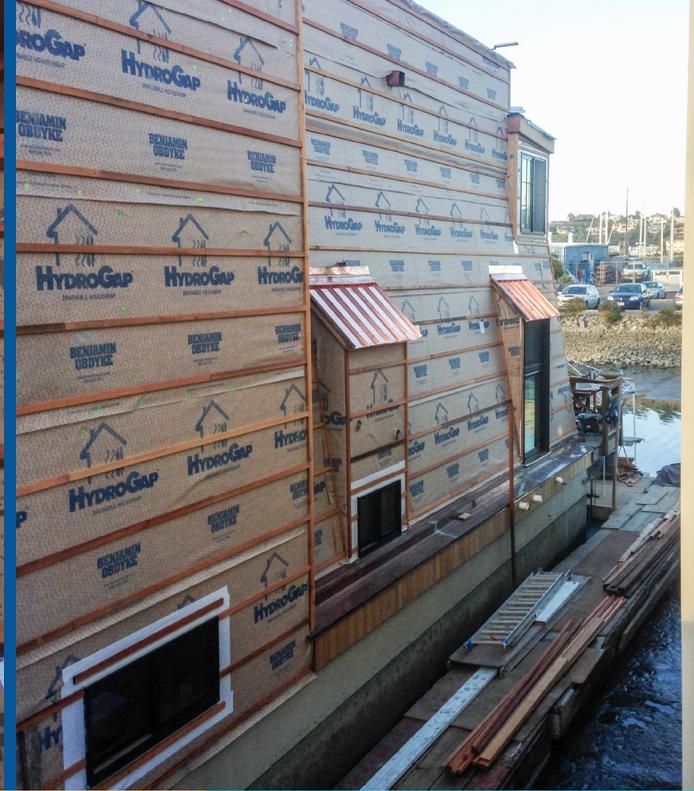
Creating a Watertight Seal

In response to modern building science that demands water be let out, rather than kept out, Benjamin Obdyke introduced HydroGap Drainable Housewrap for these exact conditions. Considering that Sausalito is widely known for its weather-beaten houseboat communities, which require the most effective moisture management systems, the importance of high-quality building and renovating is multiplied ten-fold.

In September 2014, Insight Builders was tasked with preventing water intrusion in a 1970s style houseboat. The home had been renovated two times previously in unsuccessful attempts to mitigate unhealthy factors such as rot, mold, water damage and poor ventilation – problems for many houseboats in the region. But issues beyond the coastal weather made Insight's job even more complicated.

"Houseboat renovation is a completely different environment than the normal building world," said Insight owner Charlie Warner, who has dealt exclusively in houseboat remodels for more than 15 years. "During the course of a houseboat project, we have to navigate changing tides, work off floating docks and figure out how to be secure when using ladders and climbing up the sides of buildings. That's not to mention structural problems that can be exacerbated in a houseboat."

In order to complete the project on time and under budget, Warner knew he would need a permeable housewrap with water shedding capabilities that could also withstand the three-month exposure period. After careful analysis, HydroGap was identified as the perfect solution for its durability, accompanying the installation of new windows and copper flashings to create a watertight seal around the house.



Preventing Trapped Moisture

“Using HydroGap and HydroFlash ensured that we would not have to tape the seams; the simple installation process saved both time and expense,” said Warner.

As soon as the watertight seal was created, however, the home’s new interior windows began fogging, creating moisture condensation that could cause major damage. This problem was largely due to a commonly overlooked factor known as human generated moisture, which can be anything from cooking to showering to even breathing.

To address the issue of high interior humidity levels inside the house, Warner strategically placed an humidistat-controlled exhaust fan into a remodeled shower -- which acted as a whole-house fan -- and also incorporated HydroGap to allow water vapor to escape. Warner noticed in his research that other poly-type water barriers lack comparable breathability, causing condensation on the inside of the housewrap that will eventually form rot. “The beauty of HydroGap is its ability to be applied in any direction without sacrificing drainage capabilities or vapor permeability,” said Warner. “Ultimately, that means that this house will no longer have a mold issue stemming from retained moisture.”

With the help of HydroGap and HydroFlash, the successful project and its builder were recognized as early adopters of modern building science. The homeowner, a former industrial designer with a keen eye for detail, was thrilled with the result. Local competitors who have taken notice of Insight’s work are now using more Benjamin Obdyke products on their own projects, according to Warner.

“It has always been important for Insight to offer clients the best products and designs for the benefit of their long-term health and safety. I was pleased to be able to do that with Benjamin Obdyke products and to see other builders following suit. We anticipate many opportunities to use HydroGap and HydroFlash on different applications in the future.”

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Charlie Warner,
Insight Builders Owner

About Benjamin Obdyke

Since 1868, Benjamin Obdyke has been a leading designer and provider of moisture management solutions. Our founder, Benjamin P. Obdyke, pioneered the first-generation corrugated downspout. This innovation ultimately led to the modern day Benjamin Obdyke. Benjamin Obdyke’s pioneering spirit remains the hallmark of our company today.

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