



A boy's dream: A big truck, a big hole and lots of concrete and dirt.

High temps don't affect progress

Editor's note:

Construction has begun! Follow Jason Hammond as he and his family build their new house. Go to www.startribune.com/newhouse to visit his blog, and watch Homes for periodic updates.

By JASON HAMMOND
Special to the Star Tribune

A boom truck from Plummer Concrete pulled onto our job site, carrying hundreds of pounds of concrete wall forms.

In college I worked on a crew that poured concrete walls, so I knew all too well what lay ahead for these guys as the temperature rose into the 90s with high humidity and a similar forecast for the next few days.

We chose Plummer Concrete as our subcontractor because they have experience in installing this unusual concrete foundation system, which is somewhat similar to traditional poured concrete walls.

Called Thermomass, the system features a layer of insulation sandwiched between two layers of concrete, forming a highly energy-efficient wall that is resistant to mold, mildew and cold, problems often associated with basements.

Many of our walls are above-grade and require a fair amount of rebar (steel reinforcement), with sheets of rigid form insulation slid between the two layers of rebar and then enclosed in the wall forms.



Provided by JASON HAMMOND

The Thermomass system sandwiches a layer of insulation between two layers of poured concrete to create a mildew-resistant, energy-efficient wall.



In addition, all of the window openings needed to be blocked out with wood forms and the crews have to install conduit to accommodate wiring.

Monday was muggy, but cloud cover provided some protection from the heat as the crew worked to set the forms. Tuesday offered no such solace.

At lunchtime I made a trip to the site to see what progress had been

made. As I stepped out of my car, the heat of the day was so thick that it made breathing a chore and I was worried that it would cause the work to slow.

To my surprise the crew had made significant progress, keeping the project on schedule and, with luck, ready for concrete at the end of the week.

Jason is at Hammond@mojosolo.com.



A close-up of the rigid form insulation and unique tie system used to suspend the insulation between the forms.