

# PROJECT > Building New Visitor Center and Café

Boerner Botanical Gardens, Hales Corners, WI



## PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Masonry Specialists of Union Grove, Wis., turned to custom blending to complete a job for the Boerner Botanical Gardens on the New Visitor Center and Café for Milwaukee County. Mortar used for the project was required to match nearby structures built in the early 1900s. The job also called for a latex additive to increase bond and eliminate water penetration.

When using conventional field mixing methods, adding pigments at the mixer can prove challenging. Pigment must be measured accurately, and moisture content in sand piles varies from dry to wet conditions. In addition, many colors are temperamental to the varying sand dosages, with deep reds and darker colors generally requiring more care in the sand/cement/water ratio to ensure consistent color.

## PROJECT DURATION:

6 months

## PROJECT COMPLETION

DATE: 2003

To avoid these potential complications, Masonry Specialists turned to QUIKRETE® for a custom design mix. QUIKRETE® appraised the existing structures and conducted lab experimentation to determine the perfect mortar match for these structures. Matching the texture was challenging, as it consisted of a combination of 3/8" pea stone, coarse and fine sand, pigment and a latex additive within the mortar. Experimentation also showed that to obtain a color match, the mortar needed a pigment. QUIKRETE® provided Masonry Specialists with a pre-blended custom mix that matched the color and texture of existing structures, eliminating the need for mixing in the field.

*"Mixing the mortar to obtain the right texture for every batch would have been difficult to accomplish in the field. We also had to strike the joints with a bucket trowel to match the original building. One man was able to do 80 to 120 square feet a day with this fieldstone. I can't imagine having to measure all the different materials for the mortar. QUIKRETE® provided the solution to help us develop a match."*

Tony Fox, President of Masonry Specialists

## CONTRACTORS:

J.P. Cullen & Sons Inc.  
Masonry Specialists LLC

## QUIKRETE® PRODUCTS USED:

- Type "S" Mortar – 100 bags (3000 lb. bulk bags)
- Colored Latex Modified mortar – 100 bags (3000 lb. bulk bags)
- Core-Fill Grout (3000 PSI Pea Gravel grout) – 100 bags (3000 lb. bulk bags)

