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# What exactly are Expansion Joints?

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Have you heard the term Expansion Joints used in the past and wondered what they are? You could probably hazard a guess that Expansion Joints were special types of joints that expanded when required but in what types of scenarios would they be of use?

Well, there are many different types of Expansion Joints on the market sector and some are used for heat-induced expansion in Thermal Insulation projects whilst others might be used in the construction industry. Letâ€™s take a look at some of the more common uses of Expansion Joints, hopefully thatâ€™ll shed a bit of light on the subject and youâ€™ll understand a little more about joints that are designed to expand at specific times.

Feeling moved?

You would be if you were a bridge that was fitted with Expansion Joints. Itâ€™s quite common to fit bridges with Expansion Joints and they allow small movements in the structure to cater for free flowing traffic. Expansion Joints in bridges allow for temperature variations, they take into consideration expansion in hot weather and shrinkage during colder spells. By design all structures move a little and a bridge that is fitted with Expansion Joints is pre-armed against movement in the future, whether that is on a small, medium or large scale.

Expansion Joints are commonly used on bridges and theyâ€™re widely used in the Thermal Insulation sector as well.

Expansions in pipes

Another main use for Expansion Joints is for pipe displacement within a building. When fitted for this purpose the Expansion Joints actively compensate for the movement of pipes, especially when gases or steam is involved that generates high temperatures. The Expansion Joints absorb the movement in the pipes they can handle vibration and counteract the change in position.

More often than not Expansion Joints are manufactured by experienced companies who specialize in Thermal Insulation products and they supply fabric, rubber and metal joints for a variety of projects.

By now you should know a little more about Expansion Joints and have a better idea of how some of them are used within society so the next time you hear the term youâ€™ll be a little wiser.

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