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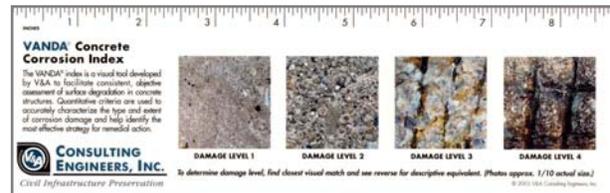
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New literature

Free Corrosion Assessment Tool from V&A Consulting Engineers Helps Keep Concrete Facilities in Shape

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, February 9, 2006 — To reduce what its calls a “persistent information gap” in public asset management, corrosion consultants **V&A Consulting Engineers, Inc.** (Oakland, CA) is offering a simplified condition assessment tool that the company says has saved its clients and taxpayers substantial sums by improving the speed and quality of field reports.

“Facility owners and engineers today have an arsenal of technical standards and sophisticated testing technologies, but in many cases, effective asset management comes down to simple first-hand visual inspection,” says V&A’s founder and president Jose Villalobos, P.E. “In everyday practice, important maintenance and repair decisions are often made based on inconsistent, subjective assessments of corrosion within a critical facility or system component. This can and does lead to misallocation of resources and possible risk to the environment and public health and safety.”



The image shows the back of the VANDA Concrete Corrosion Index tool. It features a ruler at the top with markings from 1 to 22 inches. Below the ruler, the text reads "DAMAGE LEVEL" and "CONSULTING ENGINEERS, INC. Civil Infrastructure Preservation". There is a table with four columns corresponding to the damage levels. The table has the following content:

DAMAGE LEVEL	1	2	3	4
Overall:	Little or no damage	Observable damage to concrete surface	Significant loss of concrete surface	Substantial concrete spalling exposing reinforcement
Hardness:	No loss of mortar hardness	Some loss of mortar hardness	Complete loss of mortar hardness	Complete loss of mortar hardness
Smoothness:	Surface smooth	Small-diameter aggregate exposed	Large-diameter aggregate exposed	Large-diameter aggregate exposed
Crackings:	None	Darkened steel ends of rebar protrusions	1/8" - 1/2" wide, moderate frequency	Recessed ends of 1/2" and greater
Spallings:	None	Islands of rebar protrusion	Deep spalling of moderate frequency	Deep spalling of high frequency
Reinforcing steel:	No exposure or damage	Partial exposure but no visible damage or corrosion	Exposed, damaged and corroded, but repairable	Corroded or exposed; structure severely deteriorated

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The “VANDA” Concrete Corrosion Index (above, front & back) uses a four-level quantitative rating system to facilitate consistent, objective asset condition reporting.

To help Operations & Maintenance (O&M) personnel as well as field engineers communicate more accurately and efficiently, Villalobos and his colleagues developed what they call the **VANDA**® (“V and A”) **Concrete Corrosion Index**, a simplified four-level visual rating system for characterizing the type and amount of degradation observed on reinforced concrete tanks, pipelines, etc.

[MORE]

Free Corrosion Assessment Tool from V&A Helps Keep Concrete Facilities in Shape, page 2

“The index makes it easier to deliver accurate, quantitative reports based on specific field observations of the overall appearance, smoothness, loss of hardness, cracking, spalling and condition of reinforcing steel,” Villalobos says. “We have used it for over ten years, and so have many of our clients, who find it to be a simple but powerful communication tool.”

The index’s greatest value is in helping to more realistically determine the urgency and extent of necessary repairs, Villalobos notes. “It is not uncommon for maintenance plans to call for repair or recoating of concrete within a 5- to 10-year window,” he explains. “If the damage is simply described as ‘severe,’ immediate repairs may be in order. On the other hand if the observed condition is actually at Damage Level 2, then a more measured, less costly response may be all that is needed to keep the facility in good condition. For senior-level decision-makers, who may never have a chance to inspect the site themselves, the VANDA scale often provides a more ‘hands-on’ understanding of real field conditions.”

Over the long term, Villalobos believes consistent use of objective measures like the VANDA index would lead to more cost-effective maintenance and rehab decisions, and ultimately extend the useful life of concrete structures, saving millions of dollars annually for municipalities and taxpayers. It can also make GASB 34 compliance easier for utilities and municipalities by facilitating the assessment of infrastructure assets, he believes.

A pocket version of the VANDA[®] Concrete Corrosion Index is available upon request at no charge. Interested readers should contact Ms. Dalouny Phannavong at 510-903-6600.

About V&A Consulting Engineers:

Founded in 1979, Oakland, California-based V&A Consulting Engineers, Inc. helps clients protect and preserve public-works infrastructure and facilities used in the water, wastewater, transportation, and petrochemical industries. A noted expert on corrosion issues in public utility infrastructure, Jose Villalobos coauthored the new chapter “Corrosion Protection of Water and Wastewater Facilities” in the forthcoming *Corrosion: Materials, Environments and Industries, Vol. 13B* of the industry-standard *ASM Handbook* series.

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Editor please note: high-resolution digital files of the VANDA[®] Concrete Corrosion Index are available upon request from Salwen Business Communications (917-620-5371, public.relations@yahoo.com).