

USER PROFILE

Orvall Hall Excavating Finds DOTs Receptive to SRWs

Orvall Hall Excavating Co., located in Fort Worth, Texas, started as a small, family owned excavating business. Over the years, the company carved out an impressive niche in the construction field by providing quality excavation services in the Dallas/Fort Worth area.

In 1989, Orvall Hall Excavating expanded into bridge and structural markets. Currently, the general contractor oversees large-scale excavating, bridge and structural projects for the Texas Department of Transportation (DOT) and local municipalities. The company employs nearly 100 people.

Pioneers in SRW installation for the Texas DOT

Back in 1994, Orvall Hall Excavating pioneered one of the first large segmental retaining wall structures for the Texas DOT. At that time, block retaining walls were relatively new to the Lone Star State, and this was one of the biggest projects to come along.

The project, a wall constructed in Johnson County for State Highway 174, was part of an experimental program conducted by the Texas DOT to determine the viability of SRWs for roadway wall use.

The team effort scores

Orvall Hall Excavating teamed up with T.C. Mirafi, and Anchor Wall Systems manufacturer Pavestone Company to complete the project. Mirafi designed the reinforcement and provided the engineered drawings for the wall, which spans 36,000 square feet (3344.5m²) and reaches over 30 feet (9.3m) in height. Pavestone Company manufactured the Anchor Diamond® blocks.



Orvall Hall Excavating helped pioneer the use of SRWs by the Texas DOT when they built this wall along State Highway 174.

The project was built in phases to accommodate traffic flow. The finished structure, topped with a guardrail, is an eye pleasing and cost effective SRW for the Texas DOT. "It was a massive undertaking, with a positive outcome," says M.F. Hall, president, Orvall Hall Excavating. "We were glad to be part of the effort."

More about SRW acceptance by the Texas DOT

Texas is a huge state, with a market for mechanically stabilized earth (MSE) walls as large as the state is flat. Says Joe Bertling, Mirafi distributor, "The Texas DOT will typically select SRWs when a wall needs to be aesthetically pleasing." SRWs are also a good choice because of their engineered design, flexibility and cost competitiveness.

Right now, Bertling estimates that SRWs are being chosen about 15 percent of the time for the state's DOT projects. He adds, "The good news is, the highway market is doubling every year. As costs of SRWs decrease, and where looks matter, there's opportunity to increase the SRW market share." 