When does it matter
If you are building an Adobe wall that will be covered- that is, stuccoed or plastered, variations in block color and mortar joint color will not matter. But don't forget the other side of the wall- will it be exposed? If you are building an exposed Adobe wall, then you should stick to the same mud mortar mix throughout for appearance purposes. Plan ahead to make sure you have enough material for the job.

About unstabilized Adobe.
The unstabilized Adobe is still made by some *adoberos*. This is the humble mud adobe, without a stabilizer. It is allowed by code in NM, but must be protected from water or excess rain .

Green builders are correct in saying that this type of time-honored adobe consumes the least number of B.T.U.s in manufacture (requires less energy to make), BUT again, it can be damaged by water. Keep in mind that one of the factors in the formula for a green building material is its durability over time. Most green builders using Adobe materials feel that the concession to a stabilizer is worthwhile because of the durability and peace of mind gained.

One can point to many examples of ancient, unstabilized adobe walls, such as Taos Pueblo, and the Palace of the Governors in Santa Fe. Proponents of each method will forever argue their points. Just remember that when you go to town for supplies and then see that big thunderhead building up over your site twenty miles away, you will ask yourself, "Did I cover my adobes?"

The code requires that walls of unstabilized Adobe must be protected from moisture in some manner. Traditionally, this was an unstabilized mud plaster, applied or renewed every two to three years. However, in custom Adobe work in New Mexico, this cover has typically been a Portland-based, 3-coat stucco over a wire netting. Today, there are various alternative coverings that can be deployed, such as lime-based stuccos that require little wire for attachment (making them a greener choice).

Like materials
If you are buying fully stabilized Adobes, then your mud mortar must (by code) also be fully stabilized. If you are buying semi-stabilized adobes, then your mud mortar should also be semi-stabilized. This follows the general rule of using "like" materials when constructing your wall. If you were using recycled adobes from old buildings or Adobes that have no stabilizer, then the mud mortar would also have no stabilizer.

There are two types of Adobe made using asphaltic emulsions. They are:

1. **Semi-stabilized Adobe** (and mud mortar). Usually provides adequate water protection through the manufacturing, curing and construction stages, then should be covered with a permeable plaster, sealer or stucco.

The "semi" or semi-stabilized adobe is the most popular in New Mexico and is also usually the cheapest. Most of the Adobe yards make this type of block. The reason *adoberos* make the "semi" is that it uses the least amount of stabilizer that is necessary to protect their investment at the Adobe yard. When there are several thousand fresh adobes curing out in the open, you don't want your investment in time, materials and labor to be wiped out by a heavy thunderstorm.