

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS OF REPAINT PROJECTS

DOES STUCCO REQUIRE PAINTING?

Stucco is listed as a "finish" product by architects. Stucco can be mixed with available polymers, and when applied at the specified thicknesses and techniques, will exhibit waterproof properties. However, in the real world of construction, at least regionally anyway, the majority of stucco mixtures are porous. They are for aesthetic use with little structural value. A properly applied system of an acrylic latex primer and finish coat of paint over a sound stucco substrate, along with the proper caulking/sealant details will provide a protective finish for the stucco and block.

The common foundation process unfortunately results in post-construction settling of the buildings, which in turn results in stress cracks. Other construction details such as stucco over frame and lath, and lack of adequate expansion and control joints also result in stress cracks in the stucco substrate. Although stucco can be tinted, it is of little value when the building is spider-webbed with the aforementioned cracks. These cracks can many times be repaired with an acrylic latex elastomeric patching compound which can be blended into the existing surface profile. Followed up with a good paint system, the stucco will then be uniform in colors and textures.

Many times a high-build acrylic latex waterproof coating is required. This usually is specified because the building is riddled with cracks and/or subject to movement (such as stucco over frame and lath wall systems or multi-story buildings). Flex Bon "Raincheck" 100% Acrylic Latex High-Build Coatings are formulated to bridge stucco cracks up to 1/16th of an inch. "Raincheck" Waterproof Coatings also have elongation properties. They can be stretched 125% to 250%, dependent on the product, with the memory to return to its original status.

HOW OFTEN IS PAINTING REQUIRED?

Most buildings are budgeted on a five to six year cycle. This is based on one coat of a quality house paint applied at the manufacturer's recommended mil thickness. One coat of a premium quality 100% acrylic latex house paint over a primer/surface-conditioner will provide protection for eight to nine years, dependent on the direction; East, West, North, or South (South is generally the worst) and degree of exposure; protected or unprotected. Although the coating will be protecting the stucco, the overall appearance will eventually become depreciable. The coating will have probably become noticeably chalky.

Superficial chalking actually provides a degree of ultraviolet (UV) exposure protection for the coating; however, moderate to heavy chalked coatings are susceptible to the pick-up of surface contaminants, such as dirt and mildew. Of course, architectural details and environmental factors also contribute to the growth of mildew and surface contamination. Chalking also affects the perception of the color. Chalked coatings generally require the application of a surface-conditioner or "sealer" prior to repainting to ensure adhesion of finish paints.

Many new construction paint jobs last only a few years before repainting is required. This is usually due to a number of factors; painting with "construction grade" materials and methods, painting the stucco before it has cured to an acceptable pH and moisture-intrusion related problems due to lack of necessary sealants and cracks in the stucco system.

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COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS OF REPAINT PROJECTS (Continued)

WHY HAS OUR PAINT MILDEWED?

FLEX BON Exterior "Premium" and "Raincheck" 100% Acrylic Latex Coatings are formulated with two powerful mildewcides and a fungistat. The paint does not contribute to the growth of mildew. Environmental and architectural details greatly affect the growth of mildew. The best recommendation is to pressure clean the building, treat for mildew with a chlorine and water solution, and after 30 minutes rinse thoroughly. Retreat heavier areas as needed. Make sure surfaces are mildew-free before any coatings are applied.

Common to stucco over frame and lath construction is "wall sweating", the difference between the interior temperatures and exterior ambient temperatures causes the walls to sweat. Evidently, there is minimal insulation and/or vapor barrier effectively in place for this type of construction in many cases. These are easily identified at wall "Bump outs", gables, and sometimes entire second stories of residential homes.

Carpeted decks and walks weep held moisture over long periods, creating an environment for mildew. Not only is mildew a problem here, but without a horizontal grade waterproof coating beneath the carpeting, moisture can also weep into the concrete decks, resulting in spalling concrete and damaged reinforcing steel rods or cables.

Wood substrates are often contaminated before they are ever installed. Although not visible, spores can be found in the grain of the wood, and once coated it is hard to eliminate the source of contamination. Other architectural details, such as little to no soffit and poor roof designs can also result in mildew growth.

Areas with retainage ponds, dense trees or foliage, or elaborate irrigation systems (such as golf courses) also provide environments for mildew growth. There are hundreds of different mildews, fungi and algae with their own preferences and resistance characteristics.

IS PERIODIC MAINTENANCE REQUIRED?

Again, dependent on the architectural details and environmental conditions, moderate p.s.i. pressure cleaning of the buildings somewhere midway to two-thirds through its five or six year cycle not only will clean the surface of contaminant build-up, but it will also minimize coating chalks.

DOES THE WARRANTY COVER WOOD AND METAL?

No. There are so many variables associated with wood (numerous species with various peculiarities, tannins, wood rot, etc.) that is too hard to specify a fail-safe coating system.

Likewise, metal has its numerable and formidable corrosion problems that even the manufacturers of a high-performance plural component high-build epoxies and polyurethane enamels will not provide field applied warranties. Basically, a guarantee of product defect is all that can be provided in association with wood and metal substrates.

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