



SOLUTIONS

PAINTING NEW STUCCO: COMBATING THE PROBLEMS

Stucco is a wonderful surface for painting in Florida. However, two major problems can occur when painting stucco. They are efflorescence and alkalinity induced burn-out. Efflorescence is a whitish, powdery deposit made up of soluble salts and minerals that appear on the surface of concrete or stucco. Paint does not cause efflorescence. It is caused by moisture migrating to the surface carrying the soluble salts out along with it. Efflorescence is especially prevalent on unpainted fluted block and decorative concrete walls where typically the efflorescence flows out of the mortar joints, staining the surrounding areas. Virtually all cementitious compounds in Florida contain the soluble salts that can cause efflorescence. It is when moisture contained within the concrete block or building interior migrates out or when a crack in the surface allows water into the substrate that efflorescence will occur. The primary causes of moisture induced efflorescence disfiguring the paint are: extreme levels of fine cracks (spider webbing) in the surface, moisture pushing through from the interior of the building to the surface, excessive levels of soluble salts in the masonry mix, and various combinations of all three. Efflorescence is not absolutely preventable, but to minimize its occurrence, do the following:

1. Under extremely dry, hot conditions, the builder should wet down freshly applied stucco using a garden hose for two to three days after application. This cools the stucco and slows the curing process, allowing more complete hydration and internal solidification of the stucco mix.
2. If any obvious cracks develop, fill them with a smooth grade elastomeric caulking compound.
3. Don't paint the new stucco for at least 10 days, and until pH has dropped to below 11. Premature painting can trap moisture in the substrate.
4. Always apply two coats of a paint system to greatly retard the inflow and outflow of moisture from the stucco surface. We suggest the first coat be either Scott Ultra 100% Acrylic Stucco Primer #405 or Scott Acry-Prime 100% Acrylic Stucco Primer #305. Both of these primers have been specially formulated to be highly alkali resistant and compatible with new stucco. They provide a degree of insurance to inhibit unsightly discoloration from efflorescence. Especially when topcoated with a quality Scott Paint such as Scott Ultra 100% Acrylic Velvet Supercoat #420 or Scott Acry-Satin 100% Acrylic Satin House Paint #320, the stucco stands a much higher chance of resisting discoloration due to efflorescence. Because the conditions that cause efflorescence are beyond our control, Scott Paint cannot be held responsible for its occurrence.

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Corporate Office and Manufacturing Facility

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