

Cleaning Masonry Containing Dry Block ®

This is the recommended procedure for removing dust, dirt, mortar splatters, mud, cement splashes efflorescence and other stains from masonry containing DRY BLOCK® Integral Water-Repellents. The risk of damaging water repellent masonry exists whenever aggressive cleaning procedures are used. It is important to utilize good construction practices as the first step in producing a clean building. A little extra time spent while the wall is being constructed will reduce final cleaning needs, associated costs, and changes to the masonry's appearance and performance.

Good construction practices.

- Cover top course of the wall to keep water from entering the cores and cavity.
- Scaffold planks should be set back from the wall to avoid mortar splashes on the wall.
- Remove mortar droppings and stains *before* they harden. By giving the wall daily attention to brushing down the wall with a soft brush. After a mortar has hardened, a stiff brush may be necessary.
- Remove grout spills or leaks *immediately* by washing and brushing.
- Place sand on the floor next to and against the wall to mortar splashes from sticking to the wall surface.
- On taller walls, place thin plastic sheeting to protect completed work from mortar droppings.

Materials

For removal of most new construction stains from CMU's containing DRY BLOCK Integral Water-Repellent Admixtures, commercially available detergent type masonry cleaners are recommended. Always mix cleaners as directed by the manufacturer. For unusual stains that may present special cleaning difficulties, contact your local cleaner supplier for specific recommendations.

Any cleaning method more severe than this recommended procedure, such as acid cleaners at high pressure, can result in damage to masonry and can negatively affect the water-repellent properties of DRY-BLOCK® treated masonry.

Procedure

Detergent cleaners contain acids and clean by dissolving the masonry surface. The key to the process is to find the etching conditions that are severe enough to loosen or dissolve the undesirable material of the surface, but not so severe that the masonry surface is noticeably changed. For this reason it is recommended that the least severe procedure possible should be used. As well, conduct a pre-cleaning trial wash on a sample wall panel representative of the materials and workmanship to be incorporated into the project. Prior to start of construction, the architect, the block manufacturer and cleaner manufacturer should approve the cleaning procedure.

CLEANING PROCESS

1. Scrape off excess mortar deposits with pieces of concrete block, wooden scrapers or other non-metallic scraping devices.

2. Thoroughly pre-wet the surfaces to be cleaned with clean water using **low pressure spray (maximum pressure of 30-50 psi)**
3. Using a densely packed soft bristle masonry washing brush or low-pressure spray (maximum pressure of 30-50 psi), apply the **DILUTED** cleaning solution liberally. Brushing the stains either during or immediately after the application of the diluted cleaning solution. Is recommended as the effectiveness of the scrubbing action helps remove the stains and allows the use of the most dilute cleaning solution possible. Dilution rates should be worked out in the "PROCEDURE" process above. Allow the solution to remain on the wall for 1-3 minutes. **DO NOT ALLOW THE SOLUTION TO DRY ON THE MASONRY.**
4. Scrape off any mortar deposits (as in step 1) and re apply cleaning solution if necessary. **DO NOT ALLOW THE SOLUTION TO DRY ON THE MASONRY.** It is important that ALL of the masonry be cleaned the EXACT manner (including dilution rate, brushing/scraping method dwell time and reapplication) to maintain uniform appearance
5. Rinse treated surfaces thoroughly with fresh water using low pressure (maximum of 30-50 psi) Although high discouraged, if high pressure rinsing is necessary after the initial low pressure rinse, minimize the amount of water forced into the wall by (a) using a wide flange tip (never use a pointed tip), (b) keeping the tip a minimum of 12 inches from the masonry surface, and (c) directing the spray at a 45 degree angle into the wall, never spray directly perpendicular at the wall. Make sure there are several good drying days following the cleaning. **Failure to thoroughly rinse at low pressure first will result in acid being forced deep into the masonry damaging its water-repellent properties.**
6. Consult the cleaner's manufacturer's instructions for additional information and safety precautions.

NOTICE: Rinsing and pre wetting at high pressure will force water deep into the masonry substrate increasing the potential for future efflorescence. If there is acid on the masonry during high-pressure wash, the applied force will drive the acid into the masonry exposing it to acid etching on and inside the block. This can result in an increase in the through wall porosity and water absorption of the masonry.