



**A series of technical bulletins from SEK-Surebond...  
“Achieving Installation Perfection”**

**TB.4 Setting Realistic Expectations For Sealing Hardscapes**

**Test,  
Present  
and  
Seek Approval...**

It's definitely a balancing act when it's the busiest part of the season and your customers are requesting their hardscape projects get cleaned and sealed sooner rather than later.

**The easiest thing to do is go ahead and complete the project based on a verbal understanding of their expectations but...*Is that the best thing to do?***

Most hardscape accessory manufacturers who offer sealers and cleaners for pavers, concrete and natural stone advise you to test an area before completing the entire project. By testing the sealer, you are able to see how it will perform on the surface area to ensure your customer gets the desired results. Due to variances in both manufactured stone and natural stone, sealers can sometimes perform differently than expected. By performing a test with a sample paver from the project or a small area of the project, you will be able to increase your odds of completing a successful job. That's one very good reason for testing a sealer before applying on an entire job. Yet, there is another important reason to test first that can help you...

You also want to set a realistic expectation for your customer so there are no surprises and they will be satisfied with the job when you are finished. By showing your customer a sample or test area upfront with the chosen sealer applied, you hope to avoid an unhappy customer because they expected a totally different finished look than what they got. For example, the most common misconception when dealing with sealers is what constitutes wet look VS semi-gloss finish. The homeowner may hear the words "semi gloss" and expect a "wet look" or the other way around. If they are not happy you may have to spend unnecessary time and money "fixing" it to get the desired results.

**To clarify further, a wet look is best described as how the pavers would look after wetting them with water. A gloss or semi-gloss would be the amount of sheen or shine but not a color enhancer or darkener.**

The process of testing a sealer on your customer's hardscape project should be your very first step after gaining their commitment to seal their pavers, concrete or natural stone. In some cases, it may even come before their commitment and as a part of the sales process. Once the test area or sample pavers have been completed and you feel it represents how the finished project will look, it is time to present it to your customer. Take this opportunity to explain the steps of the process to complete the job and show them how their project should look once finished. Gain their feedback plus approval and move forward with aligned expectations.

**A little extra time up front  
can save A LOT of time  
and trouble later**