



## TECHNICAL BULLETIN

HARDSCAPES DONE RIGHT

### Tips For Sealing Success

TB14

Once a new hardscape is complete or an older project has been restored, it's the perfect time to apply a sealer to protect it. Surebond Sealers can offer protection without changing the look of the surface or if desired, a sealer with enhancing technology can be applied. There's a lot to know about sealing hardscapes so we offer a variety of online resources, support and education to help you achieve success. Below is a quick overview of our top tips and important considerations for optimal results.

#### 1. Selecting the Right Sealer

Surebond offers many types of sealers and each one offers different benefits. Understanding your customer's expectations and goals in sealing their hardscape will lead to selecting the right sealer for the job. Utilizing the [product selection tool](#) on [www.sek.us.com](http://www.sek.us.com) will help lead you to the best sealer options for the project. The [Surebond Sealer Selection Guide](#) can also help the select the best option based on desired results.

#### 2. Performing a Pre-Test Evaluation

To ensure final results will meet your customer's expectations, the selected sealer should be applied to a small, inconspicuous area on the surface or on a similar loose piece of surface material. Next, gain your customer's approval before full application of the sealer.

#### 3. Surface Preparation

The surface should be thoroughly clean and free from stains, oil, dust, loose material and previously applied sealer. Use Surebond spot cleaners to tackle specific stains and then follow up with our multi-purpose surface cleaner so the surface will look its best. A properly cleaned surface will provide optimal conditions for sealer adhesion.

#### 4. Ensure the Surface is Dry

Most Surebond sealers require that the surface dries 24 hours after cleaning and/or rain before application to avoid trapping moisture under the sealer. There are some exceptions to this rule such as the products in the SurfacePRO Series, SB-4400 and SB-4000. Be sure to read the product's label or tech data sheet to learn more.

#### 5. Check the Weather Forecast

Surebond sealers should be applied when day and night temperatures are between 40°F and 95°F. If the surface is too hot, the sealer may flash off or evaporate before it has time to penetrate or adhere to the surface. After applying most Surebond sealers, you will need 24 hours of dry weather for the sealer to cure properly. Again, there are some exceptions to this rule such as Surebond's SB-8700 which is rain safe after 90 minutes. Check the forecast to make sure it doesn't call for rain and be sure the irrigation system is turned off for the required period of time.

#### 6. Install Joint Sand

If using a joint stabilizing sealer to harden joint sand, the paver joints should be filled with clean, dry, correctly graded joint sand that meets the ASTM C144 standard. The top level of the joint sand should not exceed the bottom of the chamfer or 1/8" below the surface of non-beveled or tumbled pavers. Compaction is recommended after sweeping sand into the joints to minimize voids. Remove dust, debris and fine sand particles from the surface with a leaf blower before sealing.

## 7. Use the Right Tools

A sprayer is the best and quickest way to evenly apply a sealer. After spraying you will need to back roll the surface to remove excess sealer with a slit-foam roller. When using a joint stabilizing sealer, a soft foam squeegee is necessary to direct excess sealer into the joints. Use tools made especially for solvent based sealers when needed.

## 8. Slippery When Wet?

If it is determined from the sealer pre-test that the surface may become slippery after a sealer is applied, an anti-slip can be added to the sealer to increase friction.

## 9. Finally...It's Time to Apply the Sealer

Be sure to protect any surrounding landscape, vehicles, buildings and window glass from potential sealer overspray. There are two types of recommended application methods. When doing joint stabilization, spray the surface using a flood coat, following the sealer's coverage guidelines, to ensure proper joint sand penetration. Then, use a foam squeegee to direct excess sealer into the joints. Follow up with a foam roller to even out the sealer and remove any excess on the surface wherever it is pooling. When not stabilizing the joints, use a spray and back-roll technique. Using the coverage guidelines, spray enough sealer to saturate the surface then back roll with the foam roller to remove any excess sealer. Of special note, Surebond's penetrating sealers should be applied "wet-on-wet". While the first application is still wet, apply the second coat at a right angle to the first, and then back roll to remove the excess sealer. On large projects, sealing small sections at a time makes it more manageable.

## 10. Dry Time & Curing

With most Surebond sealers, the surface should be dry to the touch in approximately one hour assuming 65-85°F at 50% relative humidity. Low surface or air temperature will extend dry time. Full cure will take 24-36 hours depending on weather and site conditions. Protect the surface from dust, rain and traffic while drying. If an unexpected pop-up rain shower occurs, the surface can be covered with a tarp and removed after the rain has commenced. Reference the sealer's instructions for more information.

## 11. Maintenance

To get the best long-term performance, a sealed hardscape should be properly maintained. Keep surface clear of buildup of dirt and grime by rinsing with cold, clean water on a regular basis. Attack stains shortly after they occur. Surebond sealers are compatible with Surebond cleaners which can be used to remove general dirtiness and stains.

## 12. Sealer Re-application

The timing of when the sealer will need to be re-applied is based on a combination of which sealer was used, type of surface, customer's expectations, environmental and site conditions. Refer to the sealer's technical data sheet for more information.