TECHNICAL BULLETIN

HARDSCAPES DONE RIGHT

Joint Stabilizing Sealer vs Polymeric Sand

Which is the best option? **TB16**

There are many things to consider when determining the best option for joint stabilization.

In a new paver installation or after cleaning and removing old sand from an existing project, the next step is to install new joint sand or polymeric sand that meets the ASTM C144 standard. This is a specific gradation of fractured angular sand particles of different sizes. This sand will create the structure in the joint which helps to interlock the system together.

Polymeric sand offers stabilized (hardened) sand joints once its activated with water. SEK's PolySweep is made with a blend of native sands conforming to the ASTM C144 standard, and polymer binders that allows the joints to expand and contract with the elements such as extreme heat/cold and freeze/thaw cycles. PolySweep can be used in most applications. If surface protection and/or enhancement is desired, a Surebond sealer can be applied after the surface has dried for 24 hours following the installation of PolySweep. Surebond sealers have been tested and proven to be compatible with PolySweep when following instructions and applied properly. No need to wait 30 days to apply a Surebond sealer on a surface with PolySweep installed as some other polymeric sand manufacturers require.

The combination of ASTM C144 joint sand and a Surebond joint stabilizing sealer will harden joint sand, provide stain resistance and UV protection. Some joint stabilizing sealers will enhance the surface and provide a level of sheen/gloss. The combination of using joint sand and a joint stabilizing sealer can be used on most applications and is a great time saver. Typically the sand and sealer can be installed all in one day - once the surface has dried for 24 hours after cleaning (and/or rain). Below is a quick overview of some applications that we make a specific recommendation of using joint sand with a joint stabilizing sealer or polymeric sand.

An application where joint sand and a joint stabilizing sealer will work best is an area that is prone to wet conditions such as a patio with a deck over it, or areas that are shady, slow to dry and/or subject to a large amount of drainage. In these applications the surface may look dry but the system remains wet or it takes longer to dry. A polymeric sand would potentially not work as well in this situation because it needs to completely dry in order to fully cure.

If the customer wants to have stabilized joints and surface protection but their goals are not specifically met by a joint stabilizing sealer, polymeric sand and a specialty sealer would be the best option. PolySweep will stabilize joints and when used in combination with a Surebond sealer such as SB-5000 it will also provide extreme stain protection. If the customer wants a higher level of water and salt protection, Surebond's SB-4400 with PolySweep would be a great choice. The specialty sealer can be applied on a clean dry surface 24 hours after PolySweep has been installed per instructions.

Polymeric sand and a sealer combination may also perform better on surfaces that are subject to heavier loading or vehicular traffic, like streets and some driveways. If desired, any Surebond sealer that meets the needs of the customer can be used and applied according to directions for sealer application after PolySweep has cured.

For more helpful tips, be sure to read SEK's other tech bulletins found in the Mktg/TDS/SDS Library at www.sek.us.com.