SUREBOND®

Ready to Seal? Prepare or Beware   TB18
How to properly prepare a surface before sealing

One component of successful sealing is surface preparation.

Whether a hardscape is brand new or has been installed for years, preparation of the surface before sealing is an important process to help achieve successful, beautiful and long term results. It can be time consuming at first but in the long run it will save time, money and the hassle if the surface is not prepared properly.

Surface Preparation Steps:

Clear the Surface : Remove all furniture, potted plants and equipment that stand in the way of the work to be done. Sweep or blow off all loose soil and debris from the surface.

Complete Any Necessary Repairs: Inspect the site to determine what repairs if any need to be completed. Sunken pavers, failed edging, cracked or chipped pavers or heaved pavers are all examples of issues that once repaired will improve the safety and appearance of the surface.

Evaluate Cleaning Needs: Once repairs are completed, survey the surface to determine the type of stains to be cleaned. Select the appropriate specialty cleaner and/or overall surface cleaner to clean the surface and prepare it for sealing. Once a sealer is applied, any visible staining left on the surface can't be removed.

Check the Weather: In order to achieve optimum performance, Surebond cleaners and sealers have specific application guidelines regarding weather listed on the product packaging and technical data sheets. Be sure to consult the instructions before starting work and perform cleaning and/or sealing within those guidelines.

Protect Surrounding Areas: Protect adjacent and surrounding surfaces not intended to be cleaned or sealed as well as nearby plants and shrubs.

Perform Spot Cleaning: Test all selected cleaners on a small area before performing actual cleaning to determine appropriate dilution rate, dwell time, agitation and ultimate outcome. Following the instructions, spot clean any stains that require special attention such as oil, food and leaf stains, etc. Allow the cleaner to dwell (sit) on the surface for better penetration, if specified. Do not let cleaners dry on the surface.

Clean the Surface Overall: Using a sprayer, apply a Surebond multi-purpose surface cleaner or efflorescence cleaner. Scrub the surface with a natural fiber broom or flat surface cleaner to agitate, draw out and further break down stains and embedded dirt and grime. Thoroughly rinsing the surface removing all remaining contaminants and cleaner residue.

Let the Surface Dry: Allow surface to dry for 24 hours and inspect the surface again. Perform any additional cleaning if any stains remain.

If Needed, Install Joint Sand: If joint sand has been removed from a segmental pavement system, new polymeric sand or joint sand meeting the ASTM C144 specification should be installed. Allow the surface to dry for 24 hours after cleaning or rain before installing sand. The sand should be swept into the joints and then the surface vibrated with a vibratory roller or compactor to consolidate sand. The finished sand height should be 1/8" below the surface which may require adding additional sand after initial vibration.

Remove Remaining Dust and Sand Particles: Using a leaf blower on a slow idle, remove any remaining dust and sand particles prior to activating polymeric sand with water or applying a Surebond joint stabilizing sealer.

Activate Polymeric Sand (if applicable): If polymeric sand was used, activate with water following the installation instructions. After activation, let the surface completely dry, which can take 24—48 hours, before moving on to the sealer application step.

It's Sealer Go Time: The surface should be prepped and ready to go, but check the weather one more time to be sure no rain is in the forecast. Then, reference and follow the sealer's instructions for proper application.

For more helpful tips, be sure to visit www.sek.us.com.