

## **EXTERIOR SURFACES**

by

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Good indoor air quality begins at the exterior surface of the building. The building envelope, which includes exterior walls, doors, roof, and windows, provides the first line of defense to prohibit moisture from entering the building. Leaks in any or all of these elements can provide conditions for high indoor relative humidities, which are perfect conditions for mold growth.

All exterior materials, with the exception of most metals and glass, are porous and have the ability to absorb moisture. This includes wood, stucco, brick, block and other cementitious materials. When the material is saturated, the moisture can be forced into the building through cracks, openings, or porous building materials. Colored stuccos and synthetic stuccos touted as "maintenance free" are two of the most porous materials.

Paint is the best method for closing the pores in the exterior envelope. Two types of paint are recommended, both of which are breathable. Benjamin Moore Moor Glow, Product No. 096, is a semi-gloss acrylic paint. Porter-Flex 6000 is a

breathable elastomeric. A fungicide can be added at a minimal cost. These two paints contain additional chemicals which have the ability to seal the open pores. The preferred application method is with a brush or roller.

Brick and stone veneers can be sealed using a semi-gloss sealant similar to Benjamin Moore Duck's Back.

### **Cleaning**

Prior to the application of any paint or sealant, the surfaces must be properly cleaned. A mixture of trisodium phosphate and bleach shall be used. The chemical can be purchased at any paint store. Follow mixing directions on the box. Pool chlorine is recommended in lieu of household bleaches. The pool chlorine has less additives. The trisodium phosphate solution may also be used to clean interior surfaces. Remember to take proper precautions with any cleaning agent. Use only in a well ventilated area.