



Painting Foam-Filled Block

What are Foam-Filled Block Walls?

During the past several years, increased attention has been given to various methods of insulating concrete block structures to reduce heat loss. The use of foam or loose fill insulation in the cores of the blocks is becoming fairly common.

What is the Most Common Cause of Paint Failure on These Walls?

The most common cause of paint failure on foam-filled block walls is moisture trapped behind the paint film. During construction, the tops of insulated block walls are often left open and uncovered for extended periods before a cap or roof is installed. This practice allows rain water to soak the insulation. Subsequently, the block is coated with latex block filler and finished. When exterior ambient temperatures rise and sunlight shines on the exterior walls, moisture within migrates to the surface of the block under the applied coatings forcing a rupture of the bond between the filler and the block. Besides adversely affecting paint adhesion, wet insulation is also ineffective in reducing heat loss.

What is Recommended Before Painting Foam-Filled Block?

Prior to painting check the insulation for excessive moisture. The best method is to drill a large hole in a block in the lower part of the wall to physically see how dry the insulation is. A common moisture indicator is noticeable dampness or darkness, particularly in the lower portion of the block wall. Taping a 1'x1' plastic sheet on a lower part of the wall for 24 hours and then checking for dampness or darkness behind the sheet can also be used to check for excessive moisture in the wall. If the insulation is still wet, delay painting until it can dry out. Drilling weep holes in the bottom rows, of blocks can help accelerate moisture drainage.

What is the Best Paint Recommendation?

After ensuring that the insulation has completely dried out, fill the block walls with **3010 Concrete Coatings Block Filler Interior Exterior Primer** and finish with a **GLIDDEN PROFESSIONAL™** 100% acrylic exterior finish of choice.