

Material Compatibility

When designing or installing a plaster (stucco) wall system, a designer or installer has many options. Choosing the type of water-resistive barrier, lath, cement, sand, lime, finish coats and trim accessories to use are just some of the selections that need to be made. It is critical to consider compatibility between products and that the products are being used for their intended purpose.

Designers and contractors are encouraged to follow product manufacturer's recommendations closely. In the event of questions, discrepancies or conflicts, refer back to the manufacturer of the product in question. Some contractors prefer to use products for purposes the product manufacturer did not intend. Contractors do this based on past successes. However, this does not insure future successes in every case. There are many examples of contractors using products in unintended ways, such as the following examples:

- **Using textured cement-based stucco finishes to achieve smooth troweled textures.** Stucco manufacturers have cement-based stucco finish products that are specifically designed for smooth trowel textures. They should not be used for texture, and cement finish coats designed for a texture should not be used for a smooth trowel finish.
- **Using cement-based stucco finish over flexible PVC nose corner accessories.** PVC nose corner accessories are intended for plaster systems using an acrylic-based finish.
- **Adding ingredients.** It is not uncommon to find installers adding admixtures to plaster mixes in an effort to improve one or more properties of the mix. Even with past successes, this practice is unwise unless manufacturers of both the admixture and plaster product approve. Manufacturers take painstaking care to insure chemical compatibility of ingredients, so even a minor amount of an incompatible chemical or product may result in a failure.

Manufacturers design products for specific purposes. It is strongly recommended they be used for that purpose. Designers and contractors that take on the decision to use products "not" intended for their designed purpose essentially assume the liability of the use of that product/system in the alternate capacity.

The opinions expressed are not to be considered legal advice, an express or implied warranty. The opinions are general guidelines and every situation can vary. In the event of unclear direction, it is strongly recommended to consult product manufacturers on use of specific products and compatibility with other products.