

TECH-TALK

BULLETIN

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Supersedes all previous versions

Self-Adhered Membrane Primers

Frequently Asked Questions

This Tech-Talk is intended as a guide for commonly asked questions pertaining to use of primers to improve adhesion of self-adhering membranes. The content contained herein are theoretical and generally do not take into account all substrate or environmental conditions. Consult applicable Technical Data Sheets for further details on application, requirements and use of self-adhering membranes and primers.

Why use a primer?

Primers are used to prepare substrates by binding loose dust. The primer helps by leaving a tacky residual film to which the self-adhesive surface of the membrane is applied to improve overall adhesion to the substrate.

Can a self-adhered membrane work without primer?

It is possible to get a decent bond under ideal conditions without the use of primer. However, construction sites are commonly a dusty, dirty place and far from ideal to obtain proper adhesion. Priming is a best practice to ensure a good, long-term bond.

Does use of a primer affect the permeability of a membrane?

The effect on permeability can depend on the type of primer used and the applied coverage. Typically, any effect would be minimal so as to not create significant impact to the assembly permeance. Primers approved for use with Henry Air Barriers have little impact on permeability.

Why do some manufacturers not promote the use of primer with their vapor permeable membranes?

While Henry cannot speak for the reasoning behind what other manufacturers state in their published literature, one theory is that promoting the drop in permeance isn't favorable to the assembly performance. Some vapor permeable membranes have an initial WVT of around 10 perms, which is the qualifying benchmark to deem a membrane permeable. By adding a primer to the substrate, the system may no longer qualify as permeable.

Is using a primer expensive?

Primer can be very cost effective when factoring in the cost of labor and mitigating any necessary rework. By preparing the substrate properly the first time, costly repairs can be avoided.

What primers does Henry offer?

Henry currently offers six primers that can be used on a variety of applications and conditions:

Blueskin® Adhesive, Blueskin® LVC Adhesive, Blueskin® LVC Spray Primer, Blueskin® Spray Prep, Aquatac™, and Hi-Tac™ Adhesive.

Availability of these products can vary by location. Contact your local Henry sales representative for further information.

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What are the product differences?

There are two common types of primers: solvent- and water-based. The main differences are their curing process and environmental impact. Each provides a measurable benefit in the improvement of the bond strength of self-adhered membranes but they each could be ideal in different systems based on their application type or unique chemistry. Refer to product's respective Technical Data Sheet for further details.

- **Blueskin® Adhesive** is a fast-drying solvent-based primer offering aggressive tack easily applied most commonly by roller.
- **Blueskin® LVC Adhesive** is very similar to its sister product, Blueskin Adhesive. While it's solvent-based, its lower volatile organic compound (VOC) formulation makes it perfect for more stringent environmental applications.
- **Blueskin® LVC Spray Adhesive** is the same formulation as Blueskin LVC Adhesive but packaged in a pressurized canister allowing applicator to spray apply by simply connecting the hose.
- **Blueskin® Spray Prep** is a solvent-based adhesive available in easy-to-handle spray cans ideal for smaller project areas.
- **Aquatac™ Primer** is an environmentally friendly, low odor water-based primer.
- **Hi-Tac™ Adhesive** is a fast-drying solvent-based primer which is compatible with polystyrene insulation. Hi-Tac is ideal over insulated concrete forms (ICF) or for cold weather applications of self-adhered membranes.

Which primer should be chosen?

Generally, when applied properly, all primers will work with a wide variety of membranes and substrates. The primer selected may be based on application type or installer preference. Some things to consider when choosing a primer is environment – application temperature, code regulations, necessary safety precautions in work area; available equipment for application type, project size and timeline. Contact your local Henry sales representative for further considerations for application location.

How are the primers packaged?

Each primer is packaged based on typical application type but most offer choice based on project size and preference.

- **Blueskin® Adhesive** is available in 5 gal (17 L) and 1 gal (3.5 L) pails applied by brush, roller or spray.
- **Blueskin® LVC Adhesive** is offered in a 5 gal (17 L) pail applied by brush, roller or spray.
- **Blueskin® LVC Spray Primer** comes in 27 lb. (12 kg) canisters for spray application.
- **Blueskin® Spray Prep** comes in 15 oz. (425g) spray can.
- **Aquatac™** is available in 5 gal (17 L) pails primarily applied by roller.
- **Hi-Tac™** is packaged in 5 gal (17 L) and 1 gal (3.5 L) pails applied by brush, roller or spray.

How much coverage can be expected?

Coverage will vary depending on the substrate condition, porosity of the surface and applicator. As an example, the chart below illustrates coverage variance of a primer based on substrate.

Substrate	Aquatac™ Coverage (ft ² / gal)	Blueskin® SA Installed 36" roll per 5 gal pail (assumes 200 ft ² of coverage)
New Wood	300	7 to 7½ rolls
Block	200	4½ to 7½ rolls
Concrete	300	7 to 7½ rolls
Metal	350	8 to 10 rolls
DensGlass® Sheathing	250	2½ to 4 rolls
ICF	300	7 to 7½ rolls