



# New Rules - Manufactured Stone

for final cleandown of newly constructed manufactured stone buildings

*"Dollar for dollar, nothing has more impact on the public's perception of a newly constructed masonry building than its final cleandown."*

— David W. Boyer



## Why do we need new rules?

Because long gone are the days when cleaning masonry meant red clay brick and gray mortar only. Long gone are the days of "one size fits all" final cleandown of new masonry.

Today's masonry includes countless styles of clay brick; concrete brick; and manufactured, cast and natural stone. Trying to remove the excess mortar after construction without regard for each substrate's unique characteristics can mean disaster — color loss, etched mortar joints, wand marks and burned masonry.

The good news is that by following a few simple guidelines, you can bring home great results every time on any masonry surface — brick, block, manufactured stone — or any combination of these and other masonry units.

Some of those guidelines like "always test" are timeless. Others, like "clean early," have been around but are increasingly important. Still others, such as "know your surface", are new rules for masons brought up in the traditions of "masonry equals brick or block." Today — more than ever before — people must understand that different building materials demand a different approach to cleaning.

## 1. Know your surface.

Produced from a lightweight concrete mix, manufactured stone is wet-cast in rubber molds that are created to simulate the appearance of natural stone. Though many incorporate integral color, much of the accent color that makes manufactured stone appealing is applied to the surface of the cast units. Many producers of manufactured stone utilize accent color which is easily washed or etched from the surface of the individual "stones." This makes cleaning manufactured stone a very delicate process. In addition to selecting the best cleaning product, every effort should be taken during installation to minimize the need for cleaning. Carefully "lay" or adhere the manufactured stone as cleanly as possible. Avoid bonding agents whenever practical — they make mortar drips that are much harder to remove. Clean as you go — carefully — with a little fresh water and a soft brush.

## 2. Use the right Sure Klean® cleaner.

No matter how much care was taken during installation, most manufactured stone walls need some cleaning to remove excess mortar or construction soiling. The appropriate cleaner is Sure Klean® Manufactured Stone Cleaner. Always protect the manufactured stone when cleaning adjacent surfaces, then clean the manufactured stone separately. NEVER USE RAW ACID or cleaning formulations not specifically developed for use on manufactured stone.

## 3. Always test.

Even when you know the surface, and you have the right cleaner, test the cleaner on a small, out of the way section of the wall. On walls that incorporate several colors and textures of manufactured stone, test each stone color and type. Testing helps determine the water sensitivity of the applied accent colors, and the most efficient cleaner dwell times and dilution ratios. Many varieties of manufactured stone may be damaged or discolored by aggressive brushing or rinsing procedures. Test using the product and equipment you plan to use for general cleandown.

## 4. Use the mildest dilution that gives effective results.

The higher the dilution with fresh water, the safer you'll be, particularly on manufactured stone with surface-applied color. How do you know what the effective dilution rate is? See rule #3.

## 5. Clean early.

Don't let mortar cure too long. The longer unwanted mortar smears cure, the harder they are to remove. It's a big problem on sensitive surfaces. For manufactured stone walls, the optimal time to clean is 7 - 14 days after the mortar joints are tooled.

## 6. Basics still apply. Follow them.

- **Lightly** pre-wet the stone before applying the cleaner. When rinsing, use enough water to rinse the spent cleaner and dissolved soiling from the surface.
- **If your tests** (See rule #3) find that pressure rinsing can be safely used, 400 psi is sufficient to rinse dissolved soiling and spent cleaner from the surface. Higher psi risks wand marks, eroded mortar joints and loss of surface color and texture.
- **Follow all safety information** on the product label. It's there to protect YOU!
- **Never go it alone.** Questions or problems? Call your distributor, masonry cleaner manufacturer, or the manufacturer's local field rep. Your success is their success.

## 7. Protect what you clean.

When the cleaned masonry is dry, apply a penetrating, breathable water-repellent. By keeping water out of the manufactured stone and mortar joints, you break the destructive freeze/thaw and wet/dry cycles that can cause cracks and spalls. You'll also help prevent other water-related problems like efflorescence. For most manufactured stone, use Sure Klean® Weather Seal Siloxane PD (pre-diluted).

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