

Efflorescence

What Is It?

Efflorescence is a naturally occurring, white, powdery deposit that can appear on cement-based building materials (including bricks, cement walls, grout, and fiber cement). It is the result of a process in which moisture draws salt crystals to the surface, evaporates, and leaves a chalky substance behind.

Efflorescence occurs when all three of the following conditions exist:

1. Water-soluble salts are present in the building material.
2. There is enough moisture in the wall to turn the salts into a soluble solution.
3. There is a path for the soluble salts to get to the surface.

Efflorescence may also be a sign of water intrusion behind the siding. Make certain ALL field edge cuts are sealed with touch up paint and that all openings are properly flashed and there is no water intrusion due to over-driven nails. **Product must be stored covered and never installed wet.**

What Can Be Done about It?

While some efflorescence may weather away naturally on its own, it is best to take steps to treat it using one of the methods described.

Vinegar and Water Solution

Efflorescence can be removed with a diluted solution of household white vinegar and water. The dilution ratio is 20 to 50% vinegar in water by volume. For most cases of efflorescence, a 25% solution works well.

For best results, follow these cleaning instructions:

- Spray all plants and vegetation with water before and after application of the vinegar/water solution.
- Protect areas that will not be cleaned.
- Wet the surfaces to be cleaned with water and let stand for 5 to 10 minutes. Flood the entire surface area to be cleaned with vinegar and water solution.
- Allow the solution to sit on the surface for 10 minutes.
- Rinse the treated area with water from the top down.

Use a soft bristled brush or sponge and lightly scrub the area. Do not aggressively scrub as this may damage the surface of the painted product. Rinse thoroughly with water and allow the area to air dry.

If necessary, repeat these steps until you've reached the desired outcome.

For extra tough efflorescence, a second application or a commercially produced solution, like **BEHR PREMIUM® Concrete & Masonry Cleaner & Etcher** or **Mason Select® Concrete Etcher** may be required.

- 1st application – Use Cleaner & Etcher at a 50%/50% mix with water and apply to the surface, not allowing it to dry on the surface, then scrubbing with a soft brush not aggressively scrubbing as this may damage the surface of the painted product before rinsing with water thoroughly.
- If needed for spots still visible, 2nd application is with a 100% mix of the solution, apply to the surface not allowing it to dry on the surface, then scrubbing with a soft brush not aggressively scrubbing as this may damage the surface of the painted product before rinsing with water thoroughly.
- After two applications, if there is still a bad spot(s), do not retreat surface for two or three days, again taking care not to aggressively scrub the surface as this may damage the surface of the painted product.

Cut Dust

Never install wet product or while raining.

Please take care not to leave *cut dust* on the ColorMax board after cutting. In dry conditions the cut dust can be easily removed with a dry soft cloth. Take care not to rub or apply pressure as this may damage the pre-finished surfaced.

In the event that surface of the board is wet during cutting, do no attempt to wipe away the dust with your hand, cloth or brush as this action may imbed the dust particles into the pre-finished surface. Gently remove the dust particles with a soft cloth soaked in a bucket of solution of 5 parts water to 1 part White Vinegar solution.