

## Color Concrete Issues

### What will my color look like?

Color charts for decorative concrete are just like a color chart for paint. It doesn't look the same as the chart in the can; it looks different wet than it does dry. Painting on different days may also result in an uneven color. Color concrete can vary by location; even 60 miles difference can cause variations. Cement, Water, and aggregates vary and have an impact on the final result.

This is why consistency is so important when using color. A red used in Arizona may not produce the same results in Iowa. To get a realistic example of what the finished project will look like, ask your contractor for pictures or for local examples of work they have done. This will give you the most realistic result and help you plan your decorative concrete project and know what to expect.

### Why is my color inconsistent?

Water is the most popular curing aid. Concrete needs to maintain moisture so the cement can hydrate and build strength. To keep the surface from drying out, concrete needs to be cured to prevent surface dusting and excessive cracking. Regular concrete can be cured by fogging the top with water or using wet burlap to retain moisture. This approach will ruin color concrete. Burlap will absorb color before it has a chance to bond completely with the cement and build strength. Adding water to the top can dilute the color. Both of these can cause an uneven surface and ruin the look of the decorative look you were going for.

For smaller projects, a plastic cover will protect your color from wind drying and moisture loss and will not absorb the color. For larger jobs that are too big to cover in plastic, a chemical cure is needed. A spray cure like Spec-Chem Eco-cure is perfect for color concrete. It protects the slab from wind and keeps in moisture. Just make sure its sprayed evenly in all the whole surface so everything is protected.

### Maintenance

After your concrete is out of the drying stage it is important to seal the concrete. This is anywhere from 3 to 28 days after it was poured. You can apply a waterproof sealer to keep the effect of weather off your concrete, highly recommended for outdoor decorative concrete. For interior concrete, a seal that has UV protections will keep your color from fading and will also leave a shiny finish on your floor. For exterior concrete, we recommend Chem-Cretes PaviX Waterproofing Sealer.

