

KEL-CRETE - OLD AND "NEW" - PROVES ITS VALUE AS A GOOD "STUCCO" ADMIXTURE

Kel-Crete represents a paradox. Its genesis is interesting to those who are intimate with that genesis. To others it may be considered "another admixture" for portland cement plaster. It has been available for three decades - and is currently "new" - same product.

Techniques and Comments has researched and investigated Kel-Crete and recommends its use to enhance performance characteristics of exterior portland cement plaster.

What is Kel-Crete? First, it was developed in 1962 by a gentleman named Paul H. Kellert. It is a water-reducing agent providing a more effective cement/water ratio in plaster mixes. It also reduces shrinkage. It entrains a slight quantity of air, well within any normal bounds. It enhances compressive strengths.

It also saves on costs of portland cement products. It is marketed as a non-toxic resin that acts as a wetting and gelling agent for portland cement mortars. *Kel-Crete for Plaster* is the right product, although the firm markets *Kel-Crete for Concrete*, and *Kel-Crete for Masonry*.

Kel-Crete replaces lime, masonry cements, plasticizers, methyl cellulose, or any other admixture used in mortar. Although not necessary, admixtures such as fibers, retarders, or anti-freeze may be used with Kel-Crete. No additional air-entraining agents need to be used with Kel-Crete.

We know much about this product and have not previously reported on it. However, we feel that it is timely and for that reason devote much of this issue to this unique and peerless admixture.

Techniques and Comments, in keeping with its well-known policy, is not paid for any information about any product or service (including this one). But we can recommend its use to enhance stucco.

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WHAT'S GOING ON HERE? SINCE WHEN IS STUCCO SUPPOSED TO BE LIKE MARBLE?

Well, it looks as though stucco - the inexpensive exterior cladding used nationwide to make houses affordable (and distinctive at the same time) now is expected to conform to standards that even marble can't meet (at astronomical prices).

At least that's the expectation of some people who insidiously imply standards that never were a part of the plastering industry's customs and practices.

Basically, stucco is a blend of sand, cement (that serves as the binder) and water. It is mixed for three to four minutes (unlike concrete), and is hand or machine applied to walls and soffits.

Different tools of the trade are used to trowel it, to float it, to darby it, or to rod it. It is supposed to be reasonably level and straight, hard, durable, and attractive when covered with an integrally-colored finish coat.

It is nominally applied to a 7/8" thickness, which is somewhat puzzling these days when one considers that one-coat stucco systems, applied to a half-inch thickness, are often applied as alternates to conventional plaster. Many of these one-coat systems are applied with lath over such sheathings as Fome-Cor and gypsum sheathing. They are not restricted to polystyrene foam bases.

Stucco is a finish material in the same mode as paint, siding, or hardboard exteriors. But it has a lot of advantages like being fireproof, termite proof, and won't be blown away by strong winds.

Its mass naturally contributes to better sound control from external noises. No wall is perfect, however, since windows and doors allow sound transmission beyond control of the exterior finish.

Stucco performs for the life of a building, and is not "melted" or affected by water, rain, snow, and sun.

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