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Suitability and pre-treatment of surfaces

FACTSHEET



GLOBAL LEADER IN ADHESIVE TECHNOLOGIES

Bostik is one of the largest adhesive and sealant companies. Worldwide, we employ some 6,000 people in 50 countries across five continents. Our customers come from diverse markets, most notably the industrial manufacturing, construction and consumer sectors.

SMART INNOVATIONS

Our smart identity is underpinned by innovation. We pursue innovation vigorously, applying the latest technological advances to developing 'smart' adhesives. Our archives are laden with examples of Bostik technologies that have disrupted markets - from potato starch-based wallpaper paste to elastic attachment adhesive for diapers.

Today, our commitment to innovation is as strong as ever. We innovate with our customers through a global R&D network, comprising three international Smart Technology Centres and 8 regional centres. And we differentiate our business through this investment.



Suitability and pre-treatment of surfaces

GENERAL INFORMATION

For optimal functioning of a joint sealant it is essential that the sealant bonds well to the surface on which it has been applied. If the bonding fails, the functionality of the seal fails.

The strength of the bond between sealant and surface depends on:

- Strength of surface
- Suitability of surface
- Pre-treatment of surface
- Situation of surface during application
- Tolerance of surface to the sealant applied
- Use of bonding primer

It is important that the sealant is applied in the correct manner.

STRENGTH OF SURFACE

The surface must be stronger than the tensile force.

SUITABILITY OF SURFACE

- Bituminous surfaces
Only use bituminous sealants on these surfaces. Any other sealant types other than of bitumen may migrate. This causes some discoloration and often even changes in hardness, adhesion and durability of the silicone.
- Concrete
Concrete surfaces vary widely, due differences in formulation, and under which circumstances it is cured. Differentiation is made between (A: concrete which has been in contact with the mould in which it is cured, B: air-dried concrete). Most joint sealants are applied between concrete slabs which have been in contact with the moulds. Normally these surfaces are well cured and don't have a laitance. However it is possible the mould was pre-treated with shuttering oil. Oil can be left over in the concrete resulting in a negative effect on the bonding of the sealant. Air-dried concrete can contain laitance which needs to be removed by i.e. grinding, to gain a good bonding of sealant to the surface. In general "green" concrete must be aged for at least 4 weeks before applying sealant (because of drying shrinkage).



The surface must be “wind-dry”. (Locally drying concrete with a hairdryer or burner is not reliable as the moisture will quickly reappear) The concrete surface must be free of dust (removed by brushing or oil-free compressor air). Most of the sealants will result in bonding well on clean and solid concrete surfaces. A bonding primer must be used on expansion joints exposed to rain. Eventual repairs to joint sides can be made with plastic mortar. With mechanically loaded joints (Floor joints) it is recommended to grind the upper side of the concrete slightly sloping downwards, to significantly prevent damages on the concrete edges and the sealant joints.

- Aerated concrete and cement stone
Very thoroughly remove any dust on the surface with high pressure air. Apply primer before using elastic sealant. Acrylate dispersion sealants, like Bostik A325 UNIVERSAL ACRYLIC, can be used without primer. However, the porous surface must be pre-treated with a mixture of 1 part sealant to 2 parts of water.
- Facade brick, unglazed bricks, concrete bricks
Remove dust from the surface. Joints exposed to moisture/water must be pre-treated with primer Bostik T300 UNIVERSAL PRIMER.
- Natural stone (marble, granite)
Seal joints with a sealant which prevents migration with Plasticizer, for example Bostik S955 SEAL’N’FLEX NON-STAINING, Bostik S960 SILICONE NON-STAINING and Bostik H750 SEAL’N’BOND PREMIUM.
- Glass (glazed), ceramics, porcelain and enamel
When needed rinse surface with a clean cloth and Bostik T100 UNIVERSAL CLEANER. Silicone sealants naturally bond well to these surfaces when clean and dry. Glazed ceramic tiles can be joined with mortar before sealing. This creates a cement film on the tiles. Remove as much as of this film and pre-treat the water exposed joints (floor-joints) with primer Bostik T300 UNIVERSAL PRIMER. Cutting edges of tiles and unglazed tiles like terracotta must be pre-treated with primer Bostik T300 UNIVERSAL PRIMER.
- Painted or powder coated surfaces
Layers of paint must bond well to the surface. Remove loose layers of paint. All painted or powder coated layers are seen as plastics, with a wide variety of compositions and therefore we recommend always to clean the painted substrate with Bostik T100 UNIVERSAL CLEANER. Bonding of these surfaces can show very different results. Powder coatings can contain waxes (for paint flow purpose) which can make bonding difficult. The bonding of sealants to paints/plastics can only be assured by testing on the material itself prior to use. When sealants containing solvents or plasticizers are used, the material must be able to withstand to these.
See table #1 end of this factsheet FS012 for overview of painted surfaces.
- Plastics/Rubbers
Many different types of rubber are used, and natural and synthetic mould or foils are applied. The bonding of sealants to paints/plastics/rubbers can only be assured by testing on the material itself prior to use. There is a risk, depending on the composition of the material, that the rubber can migrate through the sealant, causing discolouring or weakening (for instance: Neoprene rubber or EPDM rubber). These effects must be tested prior to use.
- Metal (unpainted), lead, aluminium, copper, sink, INOX, iron, galvanised iron
Most metals weather through time due to environmental influences, for instance, they oxidize. This changes the property of the surfaces, therefore testing is required prior to application. Never apply a primer and/or sealants to a corroded or oxidized surface! Primers for sealants are not corrosion protectors.
Polyurethane sealants, hybrid sealants and neutrally curing silicone sealants like BostikS765 SILICONE PREMIUM N and BOSTIK S780 GLASS’N’SEAL PREMIUM can be applied to metal (with or without the use of a primer). Acetic curing silicone sealants are less useful on corrosion-sensitive metals, as during curing they releases acetic acid vapour. If moisture is present on the metal, the acetic acid will dissolve and have a strongly corrosive effect on the metal.



- Plastics
Plastics have a broad range of compositions, PVC from producer A or B can contain differences, influencing the bonding of sealants.

A bonding test is **always** recommended.

Important to know:

- Polyethylene / Polypropylene / PTFE
On these plastics virtually no bonding is possible. Also, primers are not applicable.
- Soft PVC
This plastic contains weakening agents which can migrate, causing a stick layer between the PVC and sealant within weeks.
- Polystyrene
Very sensitive to solvents (careful with primers and solvent-based sealants). Best to be cleaned with alcohol.
- Polyacrylate, PMMA and Polycarbonate
in certain circumstances incorrect sealants can cause cracks (stress cracking) in the plastic. Most sealants will not bond to these plastics.

Plastics can be very sensitive to temperature differences, with relatively high extraction (expansion) rates. Deciding on the correct dimensions of the joint is important.

PRE-TREATMENT OF THE SURFACE

The surface must be clean. All dust, dirt, loose paint and rust must be removed. This can be done with a brush, steel brush, grinder or sanding machine. Oil, grease and fat can be removed with Bostik T300 UNIVERSAL PRIMER, spirits or benzene, directly followed by polishing with a dry cloth. Make sure to replace the cloth for a new one when required, to prevent spreading of oil and fat. If sanding is not mandatory for cleaning, then do not sand as this creates scratches in the surface. For painting this is an advantage. (Paint is thin, filling the scratches). With sealant this can be a disadvantage as sealant is not smooth enough (viscous) to fill the scratches, causing a smaller bonding surface.

STATE OF SURFACE DURING APPLICATION

When a sealant is applied the surface temperature should be between + 5°C to + 40°C (applies to

environment and substrates). All substrates must be solid, clean, dry, and free of grease and dust. Clean substrates with Bostik Cleaner and apply a Bostik primer. Always test adhesion prior to application. Use Bostik Finisher to smooth the joint.

When drying porous surfaces with, for instance a hair-dryer before application of the sealant, the intended result will not be reached, as the moisture will return to the surface. Non-porous surfaces can be dried with clean and dry cloth.



TOLERANCE OF SURFACE

This is important with solvent based sealants (surface must tolerate, and be compatible with solvents). Surface contents must not migrate into the sealant or vice versa. Well-known examples of this phenomenon are bitumen, neoprene rubber, and EPDM rubber. Elements within these surfaces can migrate into the sealant, causing discolouration, and therefore decrease bonding. For this reason bitumen surfaces (roof applications) are treated with a bitumen sealant. Another example is the combination of a polysulfide sealant with acrylate dispersion paint, where weakening agents migrate from one product into another.

COMPATIBILITY

The mutual compatibility of all materials used (such as support and setting blocks, films, tapes, coatings, paints and edge sealants) should be tested in advance. Any intolerance of the materials used are excluded from warranty and/or liability by Bostik.

APPLICATION OF BONDING PRIMER

Porous surfaces like wood, stone, concrete, which are exposed to water regularly, require a bonding primer. Joints with wide expansion require bonding primer. Non-porous surfaces like glass, ceramics, metal and plastics require a sealant that directly bonds to the surfaces. Read The supplied product info. Plastic, painted surfaces, coatings, powder coatings, etcetera can have several compositions, making a bonding test before use very recommendable. A bonding test can be easily executed by applying a bead of the sealant to the surface, and judge the bonding after curing. When working with bonding primers, always follow the instructions from the manufacturer, especially where it concerns minimum and maximum drying times of the primer. **See table #2 on the next page illustrates the required application of the most common sealants on a wide range of surfaces.**

TABLE #1: GENERAL EXPERIENCE OF SEALNTS ON SEVERAL PAINTS					
Bostik	Alkyd paint	Acrylic dispersion paint	PU paint	Epoxy paint	Powder coating
A325 UNIVERSAL ACRYLIC	X	X	X	X	X
P795 SEAL'N'FLEX PREMIUM	X	X	X	X	X
S730 SILICONE PREMIUM A	X	X	0	0	0
S300 SILICONE MULTI PURPOSE	X	X	X	X	X
S520 SILICONE BATH & KITCHEN A	X	X	X	X	X
S740 GLASS'N'SEAL SILICONE N	X	X	X	X	X
S765 SILICONE PREMIUM N	X	X	X	X	X

- X = Suitable
- 0 = Limited suitable
- = Not suitable
- 1 = Test before use!



TABLE #2: APPLICATION OF BONDING PRIMER

BOSTIK PRODUCT	B535	A325	P360	H560	S300	S545
	B735	A585 A750 A975 A980 A990	P590 P790 P795 P985	H565 H725 H985	S320 S520 S570 S730	S735 S740 S765 S960
APPLICATION SURFACE						
POROUS						
Pine wood untreated	-	X	P	P	P	P
Hard wood	-	X	P	P	P	XP
Stone	X	X	XP	XP	P	XP
Concrete	X	X	XP	XP	0(1)	XP
Concrete blocks	X	X	XP	XP	0(1)	XP
Aerated concrete	X	X	P	P	0(1)	P
Limestone	-	X	P	P	0(1)	P
Gypsum	-	X	P	P	0(1)	P
Natural stone	-	X	-	X	-	0(4)
Marble	-	X	-	X	-	0(4)
NON-POROUS						
Glass	X	0(2)	0(3)	X	X	X
Ceramic	X	0(2)	X	X	X	X
Enamel	X	0(2)	X	X	X	X
Porcelain	X	0(2)	X	X	X	X
Iron	X	0(2)	XP	X	-(5)	XP
Sink	X	0(2)	XP	X	-(5)	X
Lead	X	0(2)	XP	XP	-(5)	XP
Copper	X	0(2)	XP	XP	0(5)	XP
Inox	X	0(2)	X	X	XP	X
Aluminium	X	0(2)	X	X	0(5)	X
Aluminium coated	X	0(2)	XP	XP	XP	XP
Polyethylene	-	-	-	-	-	-
Polypropylene	-	-	-	-	-	-
PTFE	-	-	-	-	-	-
Polyester	X	X	X	X	XP	X
PVC	X	X	X	X	XP	X
Polystyrene	X	X	X	X	XP	X
Polystyrene foam	-	X	X	X	X	X
Polyacrylate	-	-	-	-	-	X(7)
Polycarbonate	-	-	-	-	-	X(7)
Wood + alkyd paint	X	X	X	X	X	X
Wood + dispersion paint	X	X	X	X	X	X
Neoprene rubber	X	-	0(6)	0(6)	-	0(6)
Bitumen/tar	X	-	-	-	-	-

The following indications are used:

- X = Suitable application, mostly without primer
- XP = Suitable applications, mostly with primer mandatory.
- O = Application with limited suitability (footnotes do explain limitations)
- P = Primer mandatory.
- = Not Suitable.

1. On fresh concrete the acids from the sealant can react with the alkalis in the concrete.
2. With water the loss of bonding power can occur.
3. With exposure to U.V. light the bonding can release.
4. Use only special types not causing discoloration. (for example Bostik S955 SEAL'N'FLEX NON-STAINING)
5. The acids released during the curing of the sealant can have a corrosive effect on the metal.
6. Discoloration can occur when elements of the rubber migrate through the sealant.
7. Bostik S955 SEAL'N'FLEX NON-STAINING is preferred due to possible stress-cracking.

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