

December 14, 2009

PAINT PROBLEMS

Posted on December 14, 2009 by MillerClapperton



If I had a \$1 for each discussion I have had on paint in my 35 plus years in the construction business, I think I would be writing this from a condo at St. Simons Island, Georgia rather than here at my desk. After that length of time in the business, it would be reasonable to think that we have that element of the project “nailed down” and we could concentrate on new and dynamic elements of the construction business.

After all, Polyvinylidene Fluoride (PVDF), known by various brand names like Kynar 500®, has been acknowledged as the “gold standard” for exterior applications almost since its release in 1965. However, just this week my time has been consumed by problems on paint. In many ways, we received more consistent and better quality 20 years ago than what we are receiving now.

Think of this analogy. Imagine an iPhone in your hand. It can do maybe a thousand things better than the 256 K IBM Personal Computer that you were using 20 years ago and it almost never fails. (Note: For the benefit of our younger readers, an IBM Personal Computer was one of the first widely used computers in small businesses).

On the other hand, we are receiving paint that does not match in color and gloss and that has formability problems twenty years later. I am running the numbers to be sure, but it appears we are having more problems now than we were 20 years ago.

Is it just me, or are many of you experiencing the same phenomenon?

If you are involved with the non-residential construction industry, please vote in the poll:



I am experiencing more problems with paint finishes than in the past?



I am experiencing fewer problems with paint finishes than in the past?



I am experiencing about the same problems with paint finishes as in the past?

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Let's get a reading on the "current state of the paint art" before we attempt to dig into the causality of the current situation. We may find that we are just having a run of bad luck or we may not be using the best supplier. Anyway, let's take the temperature of the patient before we start any procedures. So, please answer the poll.

The bottom line is this: If you buy a new car, no matter what it costs from \$10,000 to \$100,000, you expect the front door to match the back door in color. Now, if a building owner buys a \$1,000,000 wall, he has every right to expect that all of the panels match in color. If those of us in the metal walls industry cannot deliver on this expectation, we should be ready for the market share of the walls market that we are going to lose, no matter what other benefits we offer.

So, we need to be realistic about this problem and get on with solving it.

Tool of the Week – Check this out. It is a review of the relative benefits of a variety of paint finishes offered for commercial exterior applications of paint on metal.

That is it for this week. Post your comments on the Blog and let us stimulate the discussion.

Thanks,

Ted S. Miller