



## **IMASCO MINERALS INC.**

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### **STUCCO - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

#### **1. What is stucco, and what is it made of?**

Stucco is a commonly used exterior cladding for single and multifamily homes, townhouses and condominiums, as well as smaller commercial buildings. It is a mix of sand, portland cement powder, lime, water, and in most cases, pigment. Stucco forms a protective outer layer that shields the building from harmful climatic conditions.

#### **2. How long does stucco last?**

While it is difficult to quantify the average lifespan of a stucco home, we can say that stucco is as durable as any commonly used exterior cladding material. Stucco is low maintenance, weather resistant, non-combustible, and it performs well in a variety of climatic conditions.

#### **3. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of stucco relative to other economical cladding options?**

Stucco is durable, low maintenance, weather resistant, insect proof, impact and noise resistant, and it performs well in a variety of climatic conditions.

Stucco also provides up to one-hour fire resistance, a feature that sets it apart from other economical cladding materials, and it is the only exterior cladding that studies have shown will improve a building's ability to withstand an earthquake.

If stucco has a disadvantage, it is that on the front end it can be more time consuming to install. But over the long-term, stucco provides far greater value than comparable economic cladding materials.

#### **4. What role did stucco play in British Columbia's Leaky Condo Crisis?**

In its final report, the Barrett Commission determined that BC's Crisis was the result of a total system failure, and it identified several key contributors, not the least of which were imprudent building design and a reliance on uncertified and inexperienced contractors. In fact, intersections involving windows, doors and decks were identified as the most frequent locations for water ingress.

Stucco installed by a certified contractor is specifically designed to prevent the type of leakage and building rot that typified the Leaky Condo Crisis. For a building envelope to

be effective in wet weather, it must be able to breath, allowing water that does permeate the surface to escape through specifically designed drainage channels, one of the principle features of a traditional stucco system.

Stucco performs well in all weather and climatic conditions. It is, in fact, hydraulic cement, which means it hardens or cures with each successive exposure to water.

**5. Is stucco suitable for a wet climate like that found on the West Coast?**

Yes. Professionally installed stucco is durable, low maintenance and weather resistant. It performs well in a variety of climatic conditions, readily adapting to wet/dry and hot/cold cycles.

**6. What colours does stucco come in?**

Recent developments in pigmentation technology have added considerable selection to stucco's traditional colour palate. In 2004, IMASCO introduced 21 rich new colours with its *Artisan* line. In all, stucco is available in over 103 colours. And because stucco is pigmented cement, it will never fade or require painting.

**7. Can you paint over stucco?**

You can paint stucco, provided you use a paint that is compatible with your existing stucco finish. FogCoat, a sand-cement based paint, is recommended for all sand-cement stucco finishes. Fog coating will dramatically improve the look of an existing stucco exterior without affecting its ability to breath (transmit moisture vapour).

It is possible to use other types of paint, such as acrylic. However, they won't last as long as a sand-cement based paint. Acrylic coatings will also negatively affect the permeability of the stucco, and potentially inhibit the release of moisture.

**8. Does a contractor need to be certified to apply stucco?**

To achieve the maximum benefit from a stucco exterior, we always recommend using a certified contractor. In 2000, IMASCO established a comprehensive contractor certification program to promote consistent, quality installation of stucco products. IMASCO regularly circulates a list of its certified contractors to architects, engineers and developers.

**9. What are EIFS?**

External Insulating Finishing Systems (EIFS) is a variation of the traditional stucco system. It combines stucco cladding with a polystyrene insulating foam. EIFS has been in use throughout North America for over 25 years on a wide variety of buildings and architectural designs.

**10. What is the difference between regular sand-cement stucco and acrylic stucco?**

There are two principle types of stucco finish, sand-cement and acrylic. Both incorporate the same traditional sand-cement basecoat, but the latter contains a flexible acrylic-based top layer. Acrylic stucco is more time consuming to apply, but is considered to be more water-resistant. Acrylic has a limited range of texture and comes in almost any colour imaginable. Cement stucco has an unlimited variety of textures but is limited in colour.