Barnes & Cone
ARCHITECTURAL MASONRY

# EFFLORESCENCE WARNING

All Masonry materials, including Brick, Stone, Concrete Pavers and Segmental Retaining Wall units can develop Efflorescence. Your material supplier or Contractor cannot predict when or where it will occur and cannot be responsible for its presence. A copy of Efflorescence Facts from the New York State Concrete Masonry Association is shown below. It describes what Efflorescence is, how it happens, possible removal methods and preventative measures.

## *Efflorescence Facts*

### What Is Efflorescence?

- It is usually a white powder-like deposit which sometimes appears on the face of stone or masonry products.
- Efflorescence ***IS*** probably an indication of moisture penetration.
- Efflorescence ***IS NOT*** an indication of structural deterioration.

### Where do salt deposits come from?

- The minerals are found in the soil itself, drainage gravel, masonry sand, crushed stone and components used to make the paving stone/retaining wall products.

### How it happens

- A landscape product that is put into service and then exposed to water may to a certain degree, draw soluble salts, in solution, to the surface of the unit and form efflorescence.
- The occurrence of efflorescence will continue until the majority of the water source has been depleted. Either way, it may wash off naturally overtime.

### Removal

- The masonry industry recommendation is to let mother nature take care of it naturally.
- If the efflorescence does not wear off in an acceptable period of time then it may be removed by scrubbing with a dry or water soaked stiff bristle brush, or washing the area with a masonry cleaner (no muriatic acid please!).
- Remember, masonry cleaners are acid based and may change the color or appearance of the product.

## *Preventative Measures*

- Adequate drainage detailing is the best method to ***MINIMIZE*** potential occurrence of efflorescence on your masonry landscape project.
- Providing a continuous layer of free draining stone will allow any water to quickly drain from behind the wall or under the pavers.
- Perforated drain pipe or channeling the stone on wall ends will allow water to drain also.
- Wrapping the stone layer in filter fabric will further protect the wall, preventing soil "fines" from entering the stone and pipe reducing drainage behind the wall.
- When building masonry planters fill the center with only enough soil to support plant growth.
- The majority of the planter should be filled with free draining stone.
- Place filter fabric on the top of stone to reduce loss of top soil.


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