



CLEANING WITH PRESSURE WASHERS

Cause and effect

It is NOT recommended to clean down blockwork using high pressure water washers. The damage that can be done could lead to serious repercussions for the appearance. High pressure washers blast away the fines of the block work and it is permanently damaged. Achieving the right level of pressure to remove surface soiling but not the fabric of the material is essential.

Prevention

The Forticrete Site-work Guide advises on the correct procedure for cleaning down block-work and states that high pressure washers should not be used.

However a hose can be used, never to exceed a rating of 200 psi (14 bar), at a distance from the surface but always test an inconspicuous area before attempting on visible elevations.

Water pressure cleaning is a recognised method of removing building site detritus and general grime from facades, if this is the preferred method of cleaning then certain guidelines

should be adhered to in order to minimise damage to the fabric of the building.

Operating pressures are not necessarily the pressures at the wall face. These may be strongly influenced by other significant factors, including: water flow rates; nozzle shape and size; nozzle wear; distance between the nozzle and the wall; distance and height between the equipment and the work face; angle and direction of the nozzle.

All of the factors including equipment pressure should be selected and adjusted to suit the substrate and soiling for each individual case.

Further details on cleaning of concrete can be found in BS 8221-1:2012. Code of practice for cleaning and surface repair of buildings: Cleaning of natural stone, brick, terracotta and concrete, or BRE Digest 449 Part 2 Cleaning exterior masonry: methods and materials. Note: Saturation may increase the presence of lime bloom/efflorescence.

Remediation

There is no remedy once damage has occurred.



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