



## Cleaning Efflorescence

For a brief description and cause of efflorescence on plaster, refer to TSIB Technical Bulletin 60.195.

### OPTIONS:

Often the efflorescence on the surface of stucco walls is washed away by the rain or simply by hosing it off. It is best to start with simple procedures and then graduate to more intense measures if the simple procedure fails. First attempts to clean should be lightly brushing and/or hosing the bloom off.

### SOLUTION:

Solutions may be used to clean efflorescence. Some are proprietary products and available at plaster materials dealers. The manufacturer's instructions must be closely followed when using the products.

Vinegar and muriatic (hydrochloric acid) may also be used and has been shown to work well. Both must be diluted with water. Most plastering contractors have had best results with a muriatic acid mixture. The recommended ratio is 1 part muriatic acid to 10 to 12 parts water. Caution should be exercised as muriatic is extremely caustic and corrosive.

- Do not inhale fumes.
- Wear protection. (safety glasses, gloves, boots and long sleeve clothing)
- Protect plants and shrubs.

### PROCEDURE:

Always test the acid solution in an inconspicuous part of the wall to make sure it won't harm the appearance. The area should be pre-wet, this includes the surrounding areas and where "run-off" is anticipated. The area to be cleaned will likely have a slight change in color shade and cleaning should be from architectural break to architectural break. Pre-wet wall from bottom to top. A Hudson or Chapin type sprayer may be used to apply the 10:1 solution to the surface. It may be necessary to use a stiff bristle brush and lightly scrub the affected area. Rinse the wall thoroughly with clean water. The run-off area must be kept wet at all times and also rinsed thoroughly. It is also not uncommon for a slight stain to be left on the surface when the efflorescence is removed.

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