



Laboratory and Field Testing Prior to Jobsite Caulking

Polymeric Systems offers its customers the opportunity to submit actual jobsite substrate samples for adhesion and compatibility testing by PSI's laboratory to determine the suitability of the sealant proposed for use on a specific project.

This program has evolved as a result of the proliferation of release agents, waterproofing compounds, anti-graffiti compounds, sealers and coatings utilized on building components to extend a building's life expectancy. Many of these compounds provide a very difficult bonding surface for sealants. Since it is virtually impossible for anyone to visually detect these possible contaminants, jobsite or laboratory adhesion tests are necessary prior to caulking to prevent the possibility of adhesion problems developing.

Laboratory testing may be initiated by sending a letter of request along with the project name, sealants to be tested, proposed caulking start date, representative samples of the substrate material, and the person and firm originating the request. An alternative is to send a sample of the coating compound and a technical data sheet, including application directions. PSI's laboratory will then attempt to duplicate application of these materials as they would be applied on the substrate material. This latter method obviously takes

longer to obtain results. In both cases, it is advisable to allow as much time as possible for testing.

Upon receipt of the substrate or compound, PSI's laboratory will conduct comprehensive adhesion tests and provide written results to the originator.

A field test can be performed by applying several feet of the sealant to the representative joint. The sealant material should be allowed to fully cure. To test adhesion, make a cut in the cured sealant from one side of the joint to the other the entire depth of the sealant. Make two vertical cuts several inches long paralleling the side of the joint as closely as possible, extending down from the cross cut. Grasp the free length of the sealant and pull at a 90° angle to determine if a good bond has developed. If well adhered, the sealant will usually tear cohesively or be difficult to remove from the surface.

In conclusion, no project should be caulked without some type of prior adhesion testing.

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3008-0213