



Cold Weather Protection Procedures for Hydraulic Lime Mortar

The ideal temperature range for installing hydraulic lime mortars and stuccos is between 40 – 85 degrees Fahrenheit with temperatures remaining above 32 degrees for at least 3 weeks after installation is complete.

It is possible to use lime-based mortars in cooler temperatures, even below freezing, but special precautions must be taken to ensure even and thorough hardening of the mortar.

The following advice is based on our experience and is not intended as a specification.

1. In temperatures above 40 degrees, we recommend walls be well saturated before repointing and masonry units be pre-soaked before laying in lime mortar. However, if there is concern that the temperature may dip below freezing at any time during the first 3-4 weeks while the mortar is curing, the masonry units should only be dampened prior to mortar installation.
2. Cooler temperatures require much longer periods for masonry to dry out and excessive moisture retained within the masonry can render it susceptible to frost damage.
3. If freezing temperatures are expected, it will be necessary to protect against the elements by tenting off the work area with heavy-duty reinforced protective plastic sheeting draped over the scaffolding. The plastic tenting must have all seams taped to prevent heat loss and draping and must be secured properly with wind clips to withstand heavy winds, rain and snow loads.
4. Ensure that all gutters and downspouts diverted away from the masonry to prevent splashing.
5. It may be necessary to heat a tented enclosure to protect the masonry from freezing. If this is the case, use electric or propane heaters (not gas or kerosene). There should be venting at the top of the tenting to help control heat and to allow moisture to slowly evaporate from the masonry. Take proper precautions to maintain even heat from the bottom of the enclosure to the top and refrain from directing heat or air currents at the wall which will cause uneven curing and rapid

drying. To help control uneven curing, it is advisable to drape pre-soaked burlap over the masonry at approximately 1" from the wall. Lightly mist the burlap (and wall if necessary) for the first seven days of curing to maintain moisture levels that are necessary for the mortar's curing process.

Hydraulic lime mortars can typically withstand freezing conditions after 2-4 weeks of protected curing.

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