

# CLEANING OF CAST STONE

## Guidance Notes:

Regardless of how much care is taken during the construction process, a final wash down will probably be required prior to final handover of the building.

## British Standard

All cleaning should be carried out in accordance with BS 8221-1:2000 Code Of Practice for cleaning and surface repair of buildings. This covers the cleaning of natural stones, brick, terracotta and concrete.

## General Guidance

The following notes are offered for guidance only. Whichever method of cleaning is chosen we recommend that it should be trialled on either an unfixed stone or a part of the finished structure which is hidden. This should determine whether the desired affect can be achieved without detriment to any of the finished product.

## Dry Brushing

Dry clean the stonework using either a stiff bristle or fibreglass brush to remove any light deposits such as mortar.

Do not use any metallic or wire brushes as this will permanently mark the face of the cast stone units.

## Water Washing

Power washing is not recommended, as this could damage the fine surface of the cast stone units or the mortar joints.

Some dirt is water soluble and water washing is a very simple process. It can be undertaken simply by bucket and brush, low pressure hosepipe and brush or low pressure multiple sprays and brush. For more stubborn stains a mild detergent such as Sugar Soap should be added and then thoroughly rinsed off.

It is very important to avoid high levels of saturation of the stone to avoid problems of over-wetting such as staining as dirty water dries out. Or efflorescence caused by mobilisation of soluble salts both in the stone and mortar joints.

## Chemical Cleaners

This is one of the most popular methods for cleaning new cast stone but care must be taken to follow the correct procedures.

Hydrochloric acid or one of a number of proprietary cleaners can be used to remove lime bloom, mortar stains and deposits. Hydrochloric acid should be diluted to 7- 10% and proprietary cleaners used as per the manufacturer's instructions. The stone and surrounding surfaces (particularly below the application area) should be wetted with water prior to any acid cleaning to prevent the stone surface burning.

Chemical cleaners can change both the colour and the texture of the stone. It is therefore recommended that as a minimum whole stones area be treated and depending on the appearance after treatment, adjacent areas may require treatment to maintain uniformity of appearance. Surface debris can be removed prior to cleaning with a plastic or wood scraper. Do not use metal implements as this can irreparably damage the surface.