



**A series of technical bulletins from SEK-Surebond...  
“Achieving Installation Perfection”**

**TB.6 Site Preparation Before Sealer Application**



Whether you just finished a new hardscape installation or are working on an existing project that has been installed for years, preparing the site before applying a sealer is a critical step to achieve successful and beautiful results.

**What steps should I take to prepare before applying sealer?**

1. Inspect the surface and site. Make any necessary repairs to the pavement system.
2. Pre-treat and spot clean any stains that require special attention. i.e. oil, food stains, etc. (Test the cleaner first ensuring it will not harm the paver surface.)
3. Apply a general purpose cleaner with a garden sprayer to the entire surface. Follow the cleaner instructions carefully. Some cleaners need to sit for 5 - 10 minutes to penetrate the surface. If efflorescence is present on surface use an efflorescence cleaner in place of general purpose cleaner.
4. Scrub the surface with a natural fiber brush to agitate and break down stains.
5. Use a pressure washer (hot water preferred) or flat surface cleaner to draw out and further break down stains plus any imbedded sediment.
6. Rinse the treated area thoroughly making sure no cleaner residue remains on the surface.
7. Let dry for a minimum of 24 hours.
8. Inspect the surface and clean again if necessary.
9. After the surface is clean and completely dry, fill joints with dry joint sand meeting ASTM C144 specification. If using polymeric sand, you can install it after the sealer application has properly cured for 24 - 48 hours. If polymeric sand is installed prior to sealing, be sure surface is dry for 24 hours before applying sealer. Joint sand/polymeric sand should not exceed the bottom of the chamfer or 1/8" below the surface of a non-beveled or tumbled paver surface.
10. Use a vibrating plate compactor to compact joint sand/polymeric sand prior to activation/stabilizing. Properly compacted joint sand eliminates air pockets and provides optimal stabilization conditions.
11. A leaf blower is recommended to blow off/remove dust and particles prior to activating polymeric sand or using a stabilizing sealer.
12. Again, it is highly recommended that the surface be free from any moisture/rain/water for a minimum of 24 hours prior to the application of most sealers.
13. Now it is time to apply the sealer per the manufacturer's instructions.

**Beware!** When it comes to applying sealer to a new or existing hardscape project, you must properly prepare and clean the surface first. If this process is skipped; any dirt, spots and residue on the substrate will be sealed in and make for an unsightly look and also could effect optimal performance of the sealer.

As you may note, it can be a timely process to prepare the surface before sealing. However, taking these steps before sealing will help you to achieve the desired results and installation perfection!

**A little extra time up front  
can save A LOT of time  
and trouble later**