

Painting know-how increases longevity

When housepaint blisters, peels, cracks, flakes or mildews, the tendency is to blame the paint instead of the painter.

More often than not, the painter is responsible, not for being a bad painter, but for being unaware of or ignoring the source of the problems.

Professional painters and paint company researchers know moisture is the worst paint enemy. Homeowners needs to battle this aggressor when doing their own painting.

The interior of the average home produces a large amount of moisture throughout the year. During winter, that moisture plays the greatest havoc on exterior painted walls. Moisture accumulates on the inside of the walls, where it's eventually drawn through to the outside by the sun's heat. Moisture on wood siding and the paint covering it spell trouble.

To combat the negative effects of moisture, first find the source. Depending upon your particular circumstances, it could be improper venting, water leaking from the roof gutters or plumbing, or rain getting into siding through seams and gaps around doors and windows.

After locating the source of moisture,

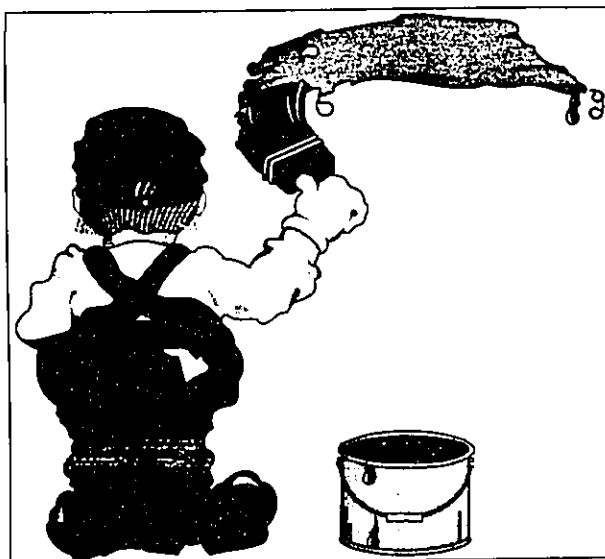
eliminate it by sealing up all cracks, openings and leaks. Provide proper ventilation by installing roof or wall-mounted ventilator ducts and fans in moisture-producing areas. Vent tubes or under-lap vents can help relieve the moisture build-up in a wall. Using a vapor-proof paint on interior walls also can help.

With the moisture problem solved, it's time to take a look at the second paint enemy: poor surface preparation.

Lack of proper priming, applying new paint over chipped, cracked or chalked paint, or a heavy build-up of old paint is a guarantee that problems will soon follow. Applying a second or third coat of paint before the previous coat completely dries also can lead to trouble.

Begin all painting jobs by properly priming wood and metal surfaces. If the old paint is damaged, use a scraper, paint remover or power sander to remove all loose paint.

Then, either feather edge the remaining paint areas or use a filler or caulking to smooth the surface before priming. If you intend to give your house a second coat of paint, be sure to wait until the first coat has had plenty of time to dry. The improved appearance of your home and the money saved by a paint job that lasts are well worth the extra effort.



Painterly: Don't blame the paint, blame the painter for a bad paint job. Homeowners are often unaware of the source of many paint problems. Moisture is the worst paint enemy.

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