



HOMEOWNERS' GUIDE TO MAINTAINING CONCRETE

Dear Proud New Homeowner,

The winter season is once again upon us, and with it comes snowy roads and icy walkways. Your municipality will be taking actions to keep roads clear and safe for commuters. In most instances, this means the use of de-icing or anti-icing substances. These chemicals can be applied to roadways and walkways before, during, and/or after snowfall.

When these products are applied, pavement and sidewalks are subjected to increased freeze/thaw cycles. While these actions can increase safety on your roads and walkways, they can also lead to a shortened lifespan for concrete foot and wheel pathways. As a homeowner, you can play an active role in preserving your investment through regular maintenance and protection of your concrete driveway, walkways, and garage pad.

Properly maintaining and protecting your concrete can ensure that it will last longer and maintain its visual appeal. If left unprotected and not maintained, you risk increased chances for flaking and scaling, as well as staining.

Follow these steps to **PROTECT YOUR INVESTMENT**:

- For standard plain concrete driveways and walkways, Concrete Alberta recommends proper sealing of the concrete surface with a silane penetrating sealer, following the manufacturers' instructions. Consult your concrete accessories specialist (list below) for recommendations on proper maintenance of both plain and coloured/decorative concrete.
- Sealing and periodic resealing of the concrete surface not only reduces moisture infiltration into the concrete, but also helps reduce staining as well as the deterioration of the top surface (scaling and flaking) from multiple cycles of freeze/thaw that are increased when de-icing/anti-icing substances are applied purposely or are tracked onto your walkway, driveway or garage pad, or left to drip from vehicles parked on your concrete surfaces.
- Sealing of the concrete surface should take place no sooner than 28 days after concrete placement, and in some instances longer, to allow the concrete to air-dry before applying a sealer.
- Depending on the time of year the concrete was placed and the amount and type of curing it received, surface preparation and appropriate timing will need to be considered before initial sealing. Check with your local concrete accessories supplier (list below) for further instructions and follow manufacturers' recommendations for best results.
- Concrete should be resealed with a high-quality sealer at a minimum of every three years, or sooner if suggested by the product manufacturer. Check with your concrete accessories professional (list below) for guidelines on any surface preparation or stain removal that may be required before applying a sealer.
- Concrete should be cleaned at least once per year to remove normal dirt and grime build up, and to remove rust or other stains.

- Wide cracks (>2 mm) in concrete should be repaired to maintain a structurally sound surface and to minimize water intrusion through cracks that can cause problems with the subgrade. Keep in mind that from an esthetics standpoint, any crack you fill will be more visible than the ones left untouched.
- Joints should be sealed to minimize or eliminate water intrusion through the joints and to help prevent dirt from collecting in the joints where weeds may grow.
- Concrete Alberta recommends the use of high-quality traction sand on exterior driveways and walkways to prevent slips, trips, and falls. If you should choose to use a de-icing chemical, you should not apply one before the driveway has been sealed and you should remove it from the concrete surface with a broom as soon as the ice has melted to prevent continuous freeze/thaw cycling that can have a negative impact on your concrete. ***The use of de-icing chemicals and fertilizers may be detrimental to your concrete surface.***

Member Concrete Accessories Specialists

National Concrete Accessories

www.nca.ca

Calgary:

Ph: 403-279-7089

Edmonton:

Ph: 780-451-1212

Red Deer:

Ph: 403-342-0210

Northland Construction Supplies

www.everythingconcrete.ca

Calgary:

Ph: 403- 531-0050

Edmonton:

Ph: 780-451-0966

Red Deer:

Ph: 403-342-1555

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Sticks and Stones Building Solutions Ltd

www.sticksandstonesbuild.com

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Unicon Concrete Specialties

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