

BESPOKE CONCRETE

SPECIALISTS IN THE MANUFACTURE OF CUSTOM MADE PRE-CAST CONCRETE AND CAST STONE PRODUCTS

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Care and Maintenance of Precast Concrete

The Material

Precast concrete can be a wonderfully attractive material that can last for many years if well maintained and looked after.

There are many ways in which precast concrete products can become damaged, sometimes unavoidably so, but with regular and routine maintenance deterioration can be slowed down and reduced dramatically.

Avoid Contaminants

Precast concrete, despite its perception, is a porous material and will always be susceptible to staining, even when sealed. It is important that contact with such things as paint, marker pen, oil based products, acids of all type, salts and any other material likely to stain is avoided. If a contaminant has penetrated the surface, then it is usually best to avoid trying aggressive methods of removal as this may lead to further, more comprehensive damage.

Avoid Impacts

Care should be taken to protect it from impacts as it can be chipped, especially at corners and edges. Skateboarders, skaters, or bikers 'grinding' along coping or bouncing down steps may cause this type of damage. Handcarts pushed up or down precast or cast stone steps may cause chips. If chips do occur it is important to re-seal the area where the chip has occurred. It may be possible to repair the chip and advice should be sought from an expert in the repair of precast concrete. Bespoke Concrete will be happy to provide advice and guidance in such circumstances.

Do not use Salt and other Deicers on our Products

In winter, precast concrete steps, stair treads, Seats, Benches, Planters, Copings etc should be carefully scraped or swept to be kept free of snow. Sand may be applied to add traction. Salt and other ice melting chemicals (deicers) should not be used on our products since they will cause spalling and pop-outs. The use of any deicing compound, even if it is not chemically reactive with concrete, can cause spalling and pop-outs by subjecting the concrete to many more freezing and thawing cycles than would occur naturally. Even deicers that come in containers that state the material will not harm concrete may cause damage by creating an abnormal amount of freeze-thaw cycles.

New concrete less than a year old is especially susceptible to this type of damage and could be affected with just one application. If salt or other ice melting chemicals must be used, for example on a public stairway, then the user should apply some type of concrete sealer made for protecting concrete from the effects of salt and other deicers. A sealer *may* prevent or reduce the amount of damage that occurs from the use of deicers. However, sealers may change the appearance of our product and will prevent future repairs from taking hold. Even with a concrete sealer applied, deicer use should be kept to a minimum and any deicer residue left on the concrete should be immediately shovelled or swept off the concrete once the ice has melted. When scraping, sweeping, ploughing, or snow blowing deicer contaminated snow, do not throw it so that it lands on or against any precast concrete or cast stone (such as site wall copings or base trim) as this could lead to spalling of those items.



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Nitecrete Manufactured and developed by Bespoke Concrete Products Ltd. International Patent pending.



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Protect from Extreme Heat

Exposure to extreme heat may cause damage. Using a torch to melt ice or welding against concrete may cause aggregates to pop.

Care of Rail and Fence Post Holes in Concrete

The holes around rail and fence posts that go into precast concrete or cast stone should be kept filled with an appropriate anchoring cement or sealant. Failure to do this may allow water into the holes which could freeze in the winter and cause the concrete to crack. Moisture in the holes could also lead to rusting of the rail or fence posts. Rail and fence posts that go into precast concrete or cast stone should not be allowed to rust since metal expands as it rusts which could cause the surrounding concrete to crack.

Cleaning

Should the precast concrete or cast stone become dirty, it can be scrubbed with a fibre brush, using a mild detergent and water and then thoroughly rinsed with clean running water. Before cleaning, thoroughly drench all surrounding masonry and concrete to prevent the dirty wash down water from being absorbed into it. No acids or prepared cleaners should be used. It is important that the manufacturer's instructions should be followed and that any product used should be checked with the manufacturer for its suitability to be used on concrete.

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