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Waterproofing Fish Ponds, Fountains With Liquid Roof

Concrete which has not been modified with special additives must be protected by an impervious coating when used for containing water. Unprotected concrete will absorb water which can then leach out soluble constituents and cause spalling when frozen.

The combination of outdoor exposure plus water immersion creates a demanding environment for a coating. It must have high resistance to water penetration, be flexible enough to withstand extremes in temperature, and not be affected by ultra violet radiation from the sun. Liquid EPDM rubber coatings possess all these characteristics and are also non toxic to fish.

Preparation

Drain water and clean surface dirt while concrete is still wet. High pressure water spray and/or scouring surface with a wire brush may be necessary in fish ponds. If algae is present treat with an algicide or 25% solution of bleach, let stand for one hour and rise well. Allow one week (rainfree) for concrete to dry out.

Reinforcing cracks and weak areas.

Cracks will remain as permanent weak spots even after repair. Creating a watertight but flexible seal will stop leaks and can be re-done if tree roots or settlement continue to enlarge the crack. Apply an even coating of catalyzed rubber to area around crack. Imbed a 6 inch wide strip of polyester fabric or felt into the wet rubber and smooth out to eliminate trapped air. The fabric must have fibers completely covering its surface to prevent rubber from draining through. Finish by applying more rubber to surface of fabric until it is pinhole free.

Application of Liquid EPDM rubber

Add catalyst and mix by following label directions. Do not begin application of rubber until dew has evaporated from concrete surface.

Application procedure can be a combination of the following methods:

- pour a quantity of rubber onto surface,
- distribute material with a rubber edged squeegee,
- smooth out wet film with a short nap roller.

Slow roller strokes will produce a better appearance and are easier on the arms.

Cure time requirement

Allow one week to fully cure the rubber if temperature is 70 degrees F before filling with water.