

Three Coat Stucco and One Coat Stucco, What's the difference?

Three coat Portland Cement Stucco has been used as a building cladding for more than 100 years. Three coat stucco is a field mixed combination of Portland cement, sand, lime and water. The application consists of a scratch coat, a brown coat and a finish coat with a combined thickness of 7/8". Most building codes outline the prescribed proportions and mixing of jobsite prepared stucco. The most common substrates are wood framing and wood sheathing or steel studs with gypsum sheathing. Before the stucco is applied a breathable type weather barrier and proper flashing for openings needs to be installed. Then the metal lath and accessories are installed per ASTM C 1063.

One coat stucco, a newer version of the traditional stucco consists of a factory pre-blended mix of Portland cement, fibers and other proprietary chemicals that improve strength and resist cracking. Sand and water are then added at the jobsite. As the name implies the stucco base is applied in a single application to a thickness of 3/8" or 1/2". A finish coat is then applied to complete the system. The finish coat can be a textured cementitious finish, a textured acrylic finish or an elastomeric coating. Typical applications for one coat stucco are single and multi-family structures as well as light commercial buildings. Because these products are proprietary, information on the components and methods of application can only be found in the individual manufacturers Evaluation Report. Additional information can be found on the National One Coat Stucco Association web site, www.onecoatstucco.org.

The Bureau office has presentations on both types of stucco systems. If your building inspection department is interested in a presentation on stucco or Exterior Insulation Finish Systems [EIFS] you can call us at 817-461-0676 or e-mail us at texasbureau@aol.com.

Bob Saindon
Technical Representative