

TOTAL WALL

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EIFS FINISHES FOR INDOOR SWIMMING AREAS

A room or enclosure containing a swimming pool or hot tub would look great with an EIFS Finish on the wall, giving it a rich masonry look and feel. Is this a viable application and what are the potential problems?

EIFS Finishes have been very successful performers as interior wall coatings for rooms containing swimming pools and hot tubs. However, due to the presence of heated and chemically treated water, there are a few conditions to watch out for.

1. Any EIFS Finish will not perform well against ponded (standing water) for an extended period of time. Therefore, there should not be horizontal coated surfaces where moisture could accumulate and stand. Also, there should be no areas at the floor line where standing water will be exposed to the Finish for any length of time.
2. The chlorine and bromine used to treat swimming pools and hot tubs are strong oxidizing chemicals. These chemicals tend to cause a gradual bleaching effect. Therefore, a choice of light colors formulated with metal oxide pigments will out-perform any colors formulated with organic colorants. Also, a finish that is rich in acrylic polymer will likely outperform a finish that is low in acrylic content or one that substitutes styrenated or other polymers that are more susceptible to oxidation.
3. Vapor drive is another thing to pay close attention to. Although the room or enclosure is likely to be kept very warm, the presence of constant high humidity from the heated water will usually keep the vapor drive positive, i.e., from the interior toward the exterior. This will typically prevent problems of blistering and delamination of the coating due to vapor coming from the backside (negative drive). However, it is possible to create conditions where water is condensed or trapped behind the finish or lamina, which will cause performance problems of the finish, or lamina. These conditions can be avoided with planning and proper wall construction.

The **TOTAL WALL** Technical Department