

Information Data Sheet

Surfactant Leaching on Newly Painted Exterior Surfaces

Surfactant leaching is a common occurrence with freshly applied paint coatings. The soapy deposits come to the surface of the paint coating when they are exposed to humid conditions. The leaching takes on the appearance of a clear or tannish colour stain, often running down the surface. The staining can be sticky to touch. While it can be found on freshly applied paint coatings of any colour, it is especially common on dark colours where large amounts of colourant have been used to deliver the desired colour.



This leaching is not a painting workmanship issue and is unlikely to be happening because the painter has done something wrong or has used low quality paint.

Surfactant leaching can become noticeable after only a few days. Once the surfactant is visible it should be washed off with a soft brush and warm water before rinsing with a garden hose to remove the soap lather. The washing down may have to be done on a couple of occasions until all the surfactant is completely released.



All preparation and painting works should be to the AS/NZS2311:2017 - Painting of Buildings