
TECHNICAL BULLETIN

Building Products and the Elements

“Building products behave predictably and understandably in response to the conditions to which they have been subjected.”

This document is designed to assist in the diagnosis of common complaints associated with building products in construction applications.

The most important points in analyzing job site issues are to assess the situation with an open mind and not to jump to conclusions. The behavior of building materials, whether wood, metal, plastic, mineral, or composite, is predictable. Based on what the material is subjected to, it will behave in an expected manner.

Addressing concerns is an exercise in gathering data and observations to determine the conditions to which building materials were subjected. It will aid in understanding how to correct the problem, minimize the potential damage, and select a course of action that will result in long-term customer satisfaction.

For this, we need to look at site conditions, application, product selection, design, installation, finishing, fastening, sealing, coating, job site storage, handling, and environmental conditions.

Only by ruling these things out can we determine if the concern may be deemed a material defect or an issue with the workmanship.

In fact, the most significant problems are generally not associated with the materials but with improper material selection, application, or installation.

I hope this sheds light on items to look for, clues to a cause, or at least illustrates that there is no one thing to look for, but many things that together can affect performance and satisfaction. The one saving grace is that with understanding comes efficiency, as the most expensive fix is always trial and error.