

Tips to Avoid Moisture Issues in Weatherboards

IMPORTANT STEPS TO AVOID MOISTURE RELATED ISSUES WITH TIMBER CLADDING

- Before undertaking any installation of weatherboards, ensure that the weatherboard and what they are nailed to are dry. Use a moisture metre to ensure the timber has not absorbed moisture in storage. If the moisture is above 15% then fillet out the boards in a covered dry space which has good air flow. Store until the boards are at or below 15%.
- If the filler is slumping (depressions forming in the nail holes after final painting) this indicates that the filler has been used on raw wood and some of the resin from the filler is being absorbed into the wood or the filler itself has become wet or has been diluted with water, which is not correct practise.
- If the filler is popping out of nail holes later, this indicates the weatherboards themselves have had excessive moisture and are drying out (shrinking). This causes the wood to contract around the nail hole and squeeze out the filler.
- Fillers have solids, resins and binders which can be absorbed into the wood. Timber is hygroscopic meaning that it loves to absorb moisture so make sure the raw wood in a nail hole or cut end is properly paint sealed before applying the filler.
- If there has been heavy rain or continuous rain for more than two days, make sure you moisture check the timber before doing any painting or filling.
- Best practice is NOT to punch nails until you are ready to paint prime seal the raw wood. This applies to any cuts you make or joins in the timber. ANYWHERE there is raw wood; the timber has to be properly sealed by a good quality alkyd paint (solvent base has better moisture resistance but water based can be used) AND allowed time to properly dry.
- Once the timber is properly sealed then you may apply the filler. DO NOT allow the filler to get wet as it absorbs moisture. DO NOT dilute the filler with water to make it spread easier. Allow to dry thoroughly as per the manufacturer's instruction then lightly sand and immediately apply a paint sealer (alkyd primer).
- At least two high quality acrylic paint (top coats) to be then applied at the earliest opportunity (and not more than 4 weeks from installation of weatherboards).
- Following the above steps will greatly reduce the chance of moisture uptake. Going forward regular maintenance and repainting at periodic intervals will preserve the timber for many years to come.
- For more information, please refer to the "Care and Maintenance" guide on our website.

