
Paint and Coatings

- P1** Do not paint masonry, stucco, limestone walls, and masonry-retaining walls that have never been painted. Painting unpainted surfaces creates an on-going maintenance issue. Paint is difficult to remove, accumulated layers will obscure decorative detail, and paint coatings (even "breathable" paints) will affect the wall's vapor transmission performance. A masonry surface colored with a wash (lead oxide, white or lime wash) is considered as unpainted and should not be painted. CMU (concrete block) should be skim coated then painted.
- P2** When removing paint from previously-painted masonry, use gentle treatments that have been tested in an inconspicuous location. Do not sandblast, pressure wash, or use acid-based cleaners (consult with Landmarks for recommended products).
- P3** On previously-painted masonry, use a "breathable" masonry paint that is compatible with – and can create a strong bond with – existing paint. Portland cement joints may be painted as the mortar mix is stronger. Do not paint over lime mortar mix joints since lime mortar mix is soft.
- P4** Paints and coatings manufactured before 1978 contained lead. Historic structures often contain hazardous substances, such as lead paint and asbestos. Since June 2010, the EPA regulations require contractors to be certified and follow specific work practices to prevent lead contamination. For additional lead paint information, contact the Metro Health Department and see the Appendix at the end of this section. For asbestos removal and disposal methods, contact Metro Air Pollution Control.