

Wienerberger Technical Guidance

ORGANIC GROWTH ON BRICKWORK

Organic growths, including algae, lichens and mosses, are commonly found growing on external surfaces of buildings in both rural and urban areas. Such growths can occur on virtually any substrate particularly where moisture levels are adequate and illumination or ventilation restricted.

They are most predominant on surfaces which are frequently wetted and remain damp for long periods.

Moss growths are also more likely to occur where an accumulation of dirt and soil has formed.

As the majority of organic contaminants thrive in damp, cool or shaded areas, often if these factors are addressed then algae, moulds and fungi usually reduce without any chemical treatment.

Organic growths can trap water around the surface of the brick and mortar, and as a consequence can lead to freeze/thaw action (frost damage).

Organic growths are predominantly green although certain algae can cause red, brown or black stains.

Surfaces that are exposed to driving rain or with design features which result in poor shedding of water are at particular risk. Mosses tend to be found on surfaces where soil and dirt has accumulated.

Surface biocides can prevent or destroy growths, with applications most effective during drier spells to prevent dilution. There are various algacides or biocides available on the market that can inhibit the formation of algal and mould growth and offer some long-term protection.

Advice should be sought from the product manufacturer with regard to the effective life of such chemical treatments. It is important that any treatment applied to brickwork is tested on a small, inconspicuous area first and applied in accordance with the manufacturers recommendations.

