



Home Tips®



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Q & A

Insulating Basement Concrete Foundation Walls?

We have just purchased a new home and the home inspector we hired said the concrete foundation walls are missing proper insulation. Could you please tell us what is required for new construction?

According to Jack Jacobs with Georgia Department Of Community Affairs, all new construction must meet the requirements of the 1992 Georgia State Energy Code and the code gives the builder two options to properly insulate unfinished basements.

Under section 502.2.1.3 the builder may elect to insulate the ceiling of the basement with insulation meeting a resistance of R-11 or under section 502.2.1.6 he may elect to insulate all of the basement walls with insulation meeting a resistance of R-11. Jack said that 8" concrete foundation walls would qualify for a R-value of around 4 which means the builder would have to add insulation which would qualify for a resistance of R-7 to the concrete foundation walls. This can be accomplished by gluing the appropriate thickness of rigid insulation directly to the concrete or framing a wood wall next to the concrete and using fiberglass batt insulation.

Treating Treated Wood?

We have just finished building a new deck with pressure treated wood. The manufacturer says the wood will last 20 years without adding any other treatment to it. Is it worth the expense of sealing it with a preservative?

You probably used pine to build your deck and most of the wood is treated with a waterborne preservative such as chromated copper arsenate (CCA). Even though the wood was treated to resist decay, it will still be affected by the weather. Treated wood can still bow, warp and split from exposure to the sun and rain.

Your deck will need to air dry for a couple of weeks since it is probably still wet from the preservative. After the wood has thoroughly dried, protect it with a water repellent preservative such as Flood CWF, Penefin or Thompson's Wood Protector. The preservative will help reduce warping, cracking and

splitting. These can be applied with a wide brush or roller and will need reapplying every year or two. When the wood is properly sealed, water will bead on top of the wood and not soak in.

Doors Won't Latch?

Two of our interior doors will not latch. Is there a simple fix?

Most of the time the doors sag or drop about 1/8" preventing the bolt from properly aligning with the strike plate. The easiest fix I have found is to remove the screws from the top hinge on the frame. This will allow you to pull the hinge away from the frame. Next, you will need a 3" counter sunk screw (drywall screws work fine) to be installed in between the hinge screw holes. This will allow you to install a large screw and cover it up with the hinge. Drill a pilot hole through the frame the same size as the screw. Be sure not to drill into the wood stud. Install the screw and pull the frame only slightly. When finished, simply reinstall the hinge.

Removing Concrete Rust Stains?

How do you remove rust stains from a concrete driveway?

According to the Portland Cement Association, rust stains can be removed by mopping and scrubbing with an acid-water mixture.

Caution: Acid is extremely dangerous and toxic. Wear safety goggles, rubber gloves and protective rubber clothing such as rain gear. Avoid skin contact and inhalation of the fumes.

Mop on a solution containing 1 lb. of oxalic acid powder or thioglycolic acid per gallon of water. Warning: Always add acid to water, never water to acid. Do not reuse the mop for other projects.

After two to three hours, rinse with clean water, scrubbing at the same time with a stiff brush or broom. Do not use a brush with metal bristles. They tend to leave small metal pieces or shavings, which will also rust. Tough stains may require a second treatment.

You can purchase oxalic acid from commercial and scientific chemical suppliers (check the yellow pages under "Chemicals"), or at some drugstores and hardware stores.

Source: The Family Handyman

