

➤ Material Safety Data Sheet: Trowel-Ready Mortar

1. APPLICATION

Fresh trowel-ready mortar is supplied in a wet plastic state to be laid between blocks, bricks and other walling units (masonry mortar) or to be applied as a coating to a wall in one or more layers (rendering). Use of mortar should be in accordance with the relevant National/European Standards and Codes of Practice.

2. COMPOSITION OF INGREDIENTS

Trowel-Ready mortar is typically a mixture of cement, natural aggregate and water. Most mixes also contain admixtures, which are added to the fresh mortar to modify some properties of the fresh or hardened mortar (e.g. retarders, air entrainers). Some mixes may also contain lime (If other raw materials are used, any additional hazards associated with their use in mortar will be notified separately).

3a. HAZARD IDENTIFICATION - FRESH MORTAR

Fresh mortar contains cement and water with the result that an alkaline solution is produced. Prolonged skin contact with fresh mortar may cause cement burns. The abrasiveness of the constituents can aggravate the effect. Repeated skin contact with fresh mortar over a period may cause irritant contact dermatitis. The abrasiveness of the constituents can aggravate the effect. Some skins are more sensitive to fresh mortar and to the small amounts of chromate which might be present and can develop allergic contact dermatitis. However, this is rare.

Fresh mortar which has not developed sufficient strength can leave walls prone to collapse from overstressing caused by loads imposed by walling units, other structural elements, wind and accidental loads. Retarded mortar and mortar which is applied to units of high or low suction and mortar which is applied at low temperatures will take longer than normal to develop strength thus leaving structures prone to the aforementioned hazards for longer than normal durations.

3b. HAZARD IDENTIFICATION - HARDENED MORTAR

Cutting, drilling, hammering and other such treatments of hardened mortar can create dust. If inhaled in excessive quantities over extended periods, respirable dust can constitute a long-term hazard. Cutting, drilling, hammering and other such treatments of hardened mortar unless adequately controlled, can also project particles at high velocity with consequent risk of impact damage and/or injury particularly to eyes and other exposed areas of the body.

4. FIRST AID MEASURES

Eye Contact (Fresh Mortar, Dust or other particles): Immediately rinse under clean running water and seek medical advice.

Skin Contact (Fresh Mortar): Immediately rinse affected areas under clean running water.

Cuts/Abrasions: Clean and treat cuts/abrasions using normal First-Aid methods. Wounds must receive prompt medical attention.

In all cases of doubt or where symptoms persist medical advice must be obtained.

5. FIRE FIGHTING MEASURES

Not applicable.

6. ACCIDENTAL RELEASE MEASURES

Follow the relevant instructions in Clauses 7 and 8. Prevent entry of fresh mortar into water courses, drains or other areas where it may cause ecological damage or where hardened mortar may cause problems. Take up mortar using appropriate equipment.

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7a. HANDLING FRESH MORTAR

Observe, and where necessary keep clear of, all vehicles/equipment involved in the delivery of mortar. In particular, keep clear of fresh mortar while it is being discharged from delivery vehicles/equipment.

- Avoid contact with eyes and skin.
- Wear protective clothing as detailed in Clause 8
- Replace clothing if it becomes saturated
- Before lifting, always size up the load. Always follow safe lifting and manual handling procedures.
- Do not construct any one walling lift to heights greater than those recommended in the relevant Standards and/or Codes of Practice.
- Do not apply loads from subsequent walling lifts, other structural elements or construction operations to walls until such time as the mortar has developed sufficient strength.
- Provide temporary support to freshly constructed walls to prevent damage by wind.
- Provide protection to freshly constructed walls to prevent damage by weather.
- Before deciding to remove temporary supports and protection and before applying subsequent loads, particular care must be taken in situations where the mortar may be prone to retardation (see Clause 3a) to ensure that the mortar has sufficiently set/stiffened. In this regard it should be noted that whilst every effort is made to accurately predict the retardation period of retarded mortars, such predictions can be affected by matters such as the suction/absorption of the walling units, climatic conditions etc.

7b. HANDLING HARDENED MORTAR

- Avoid inhalation of dust when cutting, drilling, hammering or otherwise treating hardened mortar and always wear protective clothing as detailed in Clause 8.

8. EXPOSURE CONTROLS AND PERSONAL PROTECTION

- Wear suitable protective gloves, overalls, safety helmets and suitable safety footwear with protective toe-caps in all situations.
- Wear suitable kneepads when kneeling on fresh mortar.
- Wear suitable goggles to prevent eye contact from splashing of fresh mortar or from dust and flying particles when cutting, drilling, hammering or otherwise treating hardened mortar.
- Wear suitable respiratory protection (such as dust masks) when cutting, drilling, hammering or otherwise treating hardened mortar.

9. PHYSICAL & CHEMICAL PROPERTIES

Fresh mortar is usually grey in colour (unless pigments are added) and has a wet soft or free flowing consistency. It is abrasive. The combination of cement and water in fresh mortar results in an alkaline solution. The pH level of typical fresh mortar is approximately 12. Fresh mortar subsequently hardens due to a chemical reaction between the cement and the water. Hardened mortar is abrasive. The density of mortar is typically 1.7 tonnes per cubic metre.

10. STABILITY & REACTIVITY

Not applicable

11. TOXICOLOGICAL INFORMATION

No risk upon observance of safety instructions detailed in Clauses 6, 7 and 8.

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12. ECOLOGICAL INFORMATION

Fresh mortar may result in change in pH level and may influence aquatic life forms. Hardened mortar has no ecological effects.

13. DISPOSAL CONSIDERATIONS

Hardened mortar may be recycled or placed in approved licensed landfill site.

14. TRANSPORT INFORMATION

No risk on observance of safety instructions detailed in Clause 6, 7 & 8.

15. REGULATORY INFORMATION

Not applicable.

16. OTHER INFORMATION – READY-MIXED MORTAR TUBS

Tubs are manufactured from heavy-duty industrial plastic and incorporate a steel lifting ring/handles to facilitate movement. Tubs weigh approximately 25kgs empty and 600kgs full. Tubs should only be used as containers for mortar and are not designed for any other purpose. Suitable equipment (crane, forklift or tele-porter) must be used when lifting, transporting or otherwise handling mortar tubs. The rated loading capacity of such equipment must be adequate and proper lifting procedures used. The structural integrity of the tubs and their lifting frames/handles may be impaired by wear and tear. Customers are advised that all tubs should be regularly inspected to ensure their continued structural soundness. Ensure adequate load-bearing capacity, levelness and rigidity of all surfaces/platforms etc. on which mortar tubs are placed or stored and ensure that any sub-structure supporting such surfaces/platforms etc. are similarly safe.