

VISUAL ASSESSMENT OF THE FINAL APPEARANCE OF AN EIFS INSTALLATION

An Exterior Insulation and Finish System (EIFS) is a wall cladding system that incorporates continuous insulation board, a reinforced base coat, mesh, and an applied finish.

EIFS is applied on the exterior of a structure by first attaching the insulation board with fasteners or adhesive. The base coat and finish are applied by tradespeople, typically using hand-held tools.

When making a visual assessment of an EIFS installation, view the finished surfaces from at least 10 feet away, when possible, perpendicular to the area in question. The finished surface should exhibit a uniform appearance. The overall pattern and color of the surface texture should appear reasonably uniform and free of tool marks across the viewed area.

Light striking an exterior wall surface at an extreme angle might distort the appearance of the finish color and expose minor surface variations. Surface appearance issues are generally temporary and are created by natural or artificial light striking the finished surface at an extreme angle. Light cast by a rising or setting sun and wall fixtures that wash the finished surface from a near vertical angle are the primary contributors to the visual variations.

To determine if a perceived surface issue stems from applicator error, the EIFS should be assessed multiple times a day under normal lighting and consistent weather conditions. Do not use flashlights or hand-held lights to evaluate EIFS surfaces. In most instances, the perceived surface issue will not appear under normal lighting conditions.

While visual assessment is a useful tool, it is generally subjective. Following the visual inspection process, if concerns remain about the final appearance of the EIFS, the application should be assessed using quantitative techniques.