

Stucco Failure: The Root of the Problem

If you live in a stucco home built in the last 20 years, you could be in for some costly repairs. It is possible that your home was built using a Tyvek® StuccoWrap® in place of the standard felt backing that should be layered behind a stucco exterior. Due to a known problem in its manufacturing, the Tyvek® StuccoWrap® has been failing, causing the stucco to unsuccessfully protect homes from water damage.

Further exacerbating the problem, demand was so high twenty years ago that many builders had difficulty keeping up with the influx of work. Many hired subcontractors without proper training to finish the stucco jobs. As a result, the inexperienced subcontractors may have applied half the correct thickness, leading to other issues. In many cases, windows and doors weren't properly flashed, causing water to build-up behind the walls instead of properly draining out. This excess moisture is the ideal breeding ground for mold and mildew, which can rot your house out from the inside walls.

This perfect storm of circumstances is causing widespread failure of stucco, and depending on the damage, the cost for repairs is anywhere from \$25,000-\$300,000. Some signs to look for include:

1. Mildew
2. Dark spots on the exterior that come back after cleaning
3. Staining or blanched stucco below the corners of windows
4. Damp walls or water stains
5. Leaky or foggy windows
6. Musty odor caused by the mold

If you notice a problem, we recommend scheduling a stucco inspection.



When to Contact Harth Builders About Your Stucco

If the circumstances outlined above describe your home, contact us to schedule a complimentary, no-fee consultation. One of our NARI certified remodelers will visit your home and assess the situation. If we determine that a problem exists, we will recommend a Comprehensive Stucco Evaluation (CSE).

The fee for a CSE will range from \$200 to \$1200, depending on the size and scope of the project. When a CSE is performed, we thoroughly analyze your home's interior and exterior, examining the flashings around windows and doorways, identifying areas of high moisture, dark spots, as well as exterior grading and landscaping. Photos are taken during this process to help document any trouble spots which are discovered. Within three weeks of the evaluation, a written report is prepared and submitted in person.

During this 1-2 hour meeting, your Harth Builders representative will review any issues in need of



Before (above) and After (below).



Additional Resources:

Keene Building Products: Driwall™ Rainscreen:
www.KeeneBuilding.com

SureCoat Systems for Acrylic Stucco:
www.SureCoatSystems.com

More Information on Why Stucco is Failing and How to Install it Properly:
www.GreenBuildingAdvisor.com

addressing. We will also provide a written proposal with detailed material and labor cost estimates for repairing your home, as well as a Gantt chart construction schedule. Should you select Harth Builders to perform the repair, the cost of your CSE will be credited toward the cost of your renovation.

Some clients may prefer not to re-stucco their house, or would like to explore changes to the exterior. If that is your situation, we can provide additional design services to recommend stucco alternatives, including cement board siding, stone water tables, pent roofs and other architectural treatments to enhance your curb appeal.

Stucco Siding Repair Process

Upon your approval of the cost estimate, our team will spring into action, pulling the necessary permits, ordering materials and scheduling crews. Construction will commence within 6 weeks of your authorization of the work. As with all of our projects, Harth Builders provides dedicated project management throughout the construction phase. We also offer a warranty on our work that is unsurpassed locally: 10 years on materials and 5 years on our craftsmanship. Our warranty is fully transferrable to the next owner should you sell your house within the warranty period.

Schedule a Consultation

If you are concerned about your stucco, contact us at (215) 654-0364 to schedule your risk free consultation. You can also email us at: solutions@harthbuilders.com.

