

Dryvit Stair Repair - Beware!

Contributed by C. Mason Hearn
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hello,

I have Dryvit entry stairway on my house. They are cracking and peeling along the base and I would like to get it repaired. Can it be patched or is it a total redo? Any recommendations for a small repair?

Thanks,

kerry kelley

Kerry,

Dryvit is a brand name for EIFS (Exterior Finish and Insulation System), intended for use on vertical wall cladding. We've seen it used in other applications – some not so successfully. Due to the system's limitations and potential problems if incorrectly applied, one must use extreme care and engage a professional applicator for all installations and repairs.

At-grade applications are most problematic. In fact, the Building Code dictates that there should be no applications within six inches of grade. The system's critical drainage may be compromised, may deteriorate with continuous moisture contact, or worse, may act as a termite conduit into your home.

Minor cracks might be simply patched with a color-matched sealant, if you would find that aesthetically acceptable. Most commonly-available caulks are not compatible with EIFS finishes – so even here, consult a professional. The decision regarding whether to patch or replace is also likely an aesthetic judgment, for even with a precise color match, and considering that the old material may have faded or soiled over time, I would not expect any patch to perfectly blend in color or texture-wise – a patch is a patch is a patch.

If you are local to the Richmond area, you may want to consult James River Exteriors for a more specific on-site consultation. Good luck!

Mason