

I N T H E F I E L D

Thin Coats For The Best Job

By Barry Nelson, Sales Manager

With all types of finishes thin coats vs. thick coats has always been a controversy in the field. I'd like to talk about the advantages and disadvantages of this controversial subject for our Infinity Waterbase finishes. First off, I would like to say, "always follow the recommended coverage rate listed on the instructions." As a manufacturer, we do extensive research and testing to arrive at the coverage rates that we list on our instructions. These coverage rates will give you the best results when applying the finish and also the best performance over the life of the finish coats.

A thin coat of Infinity (500 to 700 sq. ft. per gallon) will set up quicker, which in turn will allow less time for atmospheric conditions to act in a negative manner. By this I mean you will have less time for any airborne dust or particles to stick in the finish and less time for any surface irregularities to develop. One of the most common problems that can be alleviated by a thinner coat is applicator streaking (trail ridges).

In most cases contractors like to put down heavy coats of finish for better build, and to do a better job of covering irregularities between coats such as screen and inter-coat abrasion marks. The most common things I see in the field when finishes are applied at heavier than recommend rates are sheen variations, applicator trail ridges,

Figure 1. Thin Coat



Figure 2. Heavy Coat



and encapsulated bubbles. A heavy coat can allow the matting agent to float apart and lay uneven, causing sheen variations. With waterbase finishes, heavy coats in hot, humid weather can cause the floor to cup around the edges in some situations. When coatings are applied heavy in extreme cold conditions, and the house has not been brought up to the recommended temperature range, "Cold Checking" may occur. Cold checking, which looks like a broken mirror, is a condition that occurs when the finish does not fully cure and starts to crack because of the combination of cold temperature and a heavy coat of finish on the floor.

Please remember one thing, "always use the recommended coverage rates". This will give the customer the best possible floor and will make your job and mine easier. ♦