



## General Thin Brick Cleaning & Maintenance Care

Once thin brick is installed and the mortar has fully cured, thin brick should be maintained using the same techniques as full brick installations. The exception would be that if any pointing needs replaced, the depth of that point would only run as thick as the thin brick.

### General washing:

General washing whenever environmental conditions warrant a cleaning, should be performed with a neutral pH or alkaline cleaner. Summitville SL-37, Summitville SL-86, or SL-86 Gel may be surface applied. SL-37 and SL-86 may also be applied with a pressure washer. SL-86 Gel will not perform correctly if diluted to feed through spray applications.

Observe the following cautions when performing brick cleaning. Do not wash brick in direct sunlight or brick that has been heated by the sun to temperatures more than 20°F over atmospheric until the brick temperatures have dropped to reasonably close to atmospheric temperatures. Cleaners will not be effective if they dry on the brick on the contact. Temperatures must also not drop below freezing until 24 hours after the cleaning has been completed. This precaution is intended to protect the mortar just cleaned by invasive pressure washing and in interest of preventing freeze/thaw fracture damage. Do not use acidic cleaners as general maintenance cleaners. Acidic cleaners will react against the mortar and dissolve the cement in the mortar. Alkaline mortars will attract dirt, so ground in dirt may be best removed using SL-86 and removing the SL-86 with a pressure washer after a reasonable soak time.

Determine best soak time and cleaner to water concentration by testing an area of the brickwork before beginning the overall cleaning project. Apply SL-37 or SL-86 in a suitable ratio to remove dirt on the general building and allow the cleaner a soak time. The recommended start soak time is five minutes to soften dirt. After the dirt has been softened, rinse the wall surface. This is usually most easily accomplished using a pressure sprayer. Use a pressure appropriate for the surrounding area and observe all pressure sprayer cautions. Lower pressure settings may require the cleaning wand to be closer to the building than a higher psi pressure washer. Follow pressure washer precautions. Do not concentrate spray pressure close enough to cut or strip the face off the mortar or brick. Rinse wall until water wash runs clean. Allow wall to dry for 24 hours minimum before freezing temperatures.

Summitville does not recommend sealers as some sealers change the natural beauty of brick. Summitville does however, understand the interest of applying a sealer as an anti-graffiti coating. Do not apply any sealers to the wall until the wall has had a full opportunity to dry. After 24 hours, breathable sealers such as Summitville SL-99 may be applied. For anti-graffiti coatings, follow the coating manufacturer recommendations.

### Restorative work and/or Graffiti Removal

Summitville recommends the use of soda (baking soda) blasting in preference to the use of sand blasting. Soda blasting will allow more control of the cleaning process, thereby limiting potential damaging of mortar joints, window frames, glass, and delicate mason details such as cast gargoyles, school crest, etc. Follow soda blast equipment manufacturer recommendations.