

# EIFS CONTRACTORS

## ARE FINDING THAT ELASTOMERIC FINISHES AND COATINGS ARE OFTEN THE ANSWER



*Radisson Resort at the Port Cape Canaveral, Fla.*

**C**ontractors who have long applied full EIF systems are discovering that it often makes business sense to offer elastomeric finishes and coatings on new or retrofit/remodeling projects that, for one reason or another, are not going to use a full exterior insulation and finish system. The functional as well as aesthetic elastomeric products, which are trowel, roller or spray applied, hide and bridge hairline cracks

when applied over stucco, concrete, masonry and CMU. These characteristics allow a contractor to present a premium option to traditional acrylic finishes.

“Although we haven’t gone out and tried to actively sell our patching, priming and elastomeric coatings business,” said David Edwards, superintendent of Barnwell Associates, Jacksonville, Fla., “we do promote it as

part of the overall package we offer our customers.”

Edwards cited work done on a convalescence center called Surrey Place in Live Oak, Fla., as a prime example of how elastomerics can be used to expand one’s business opportunities. Due to the area’s temperature changes and humidity, unsightly cracks were appearing in the conventional float-finished stucco exterior of their five-year-old retirement/nursing home. These cracks, in turn, had facilitated water leakage and damage to the interior.

Barnwell Associates power washed the entire exterior and applied several products manufactured by Dryvit Systems, Inc., West Warwick, R.I. A non-shrink, non-slump elastomeric patching compound containing no plasticizers, was used to fill the cracks. Weatherprime™ was then sprayed on the exterior to ensure a good permanent bond for the final coating.

Lastly, a flexible, waterproof, elastomeric decorative and protective coating, in custom pink and white colors, was roller applied over the 40,000 square feet of wall area. The coating has successfully bridged hairline cracks, withstood mildew growth and dirt pickup and has not chalked in several years since application.

John Hoyt, administrator at Surrey Place, said, “The project, which finished ahead of schedule and below budget, hasn’t experienced any cracks or leaks. It looks beautiful. We couldn’t be happier.” In fact, the owners are considering the possibility of Barnwell refinishing a second building with the same materials.

Robyn Prows, owner of Prows Plastering in Salt Lake City, Utah, bases 95 percent of her business on finishes and coatings. “It is common in the west to go right over a stucco brown coat with finishes,” Prows said. “With the freeze-thaw cycles we experience, many siding materials, such as stucco, have a tendency to let loose and crack. The Dryvit finishes are more forgiving and stand up to the elements.”

Ed Rickenback, owner of ESR Wall Systems in Melbourne, Fla., has also taken advantage of the business opportunities acrylic finishes have to offer.

"I would say that close to 50 percent of our business is in finishes and coatings and its still growing," Rickenback said. "People in this area just seem to like the clean, textured look these products offer and ask for it whether its to go over stucco, concrete masonry, CMU or EIFS."

One such project was the restoration of what was to become the Radisson Resort at the Port, Cape Canaveral, Fla. Cocoa Beach Motel, Inc., the owners of the dull, outdated, 1960s-type motel, wanted to enter the hospitality business by refurbishing the facility into a Caribbean-style resort. Hav-

ing witnessed the beauty, durability and cost efficiency of exterior insulation and finish systems and products on their string of retail shops, the owners knew they didn't need to look far for their exterior cladding materials needs. After conferring with EIFS experts, it was decided that exterior coatings combined with shapes would work perfectly to renovate the motel.

First, ESR applied a coating over the motel's existing exterior CMU, as well as the substrates of the new balconies and arcades. The 100 percent acrylic-modified, fiber-reinforced, cementitious base and leveling coat is crack resistant and also served to fill the small voids in the various substrates.

Dryvit's Weatherlastic coating was then trowel applied over the 145,000 square feet of exterior wall area. An open-textured finish in several custom pink colors was used for the walls and a Sandblast® texture in Brite White for the trim. The water-based, 100 percent acrylic, copolymer resin of the finish has provided the motel's exterior with excellent elongation and flexibility characteristics even when experiencing extreme pressures and after weathering. The coatings have also resisted mildew growth and dirt pickup and have been highly chalk resistant.

"We were drawn to the coatings due to their flexibility and the dramatic textures and colors that can be achieved," said Morris Nelson, president and director of development for the Radisson and the general contractor/designer on the project. "The Dryvit Weatherlastic moves with the building so no cracks have appeared and the colors are as vivid as the day we opened." Nelson added that winning a Radisson Award for excellence in renovation and a number one ranking in area resort occupancy have been some of the more tastier fruits of everyone's labor.

Elastomeric coatings give the contractor a premium option to offer the owner of buildings, with stucco, concrete, masonry or CMU substrates, as well as EIFS. By spraying or rolling this flexible protective and decorative membrane to a building, hairline cracks and water penetration will be dramatically reduced. At the same time, owner satisfaction will increase as the building stands the test of time—reducing callbacks and increasing the contractor's chances for additional business down the road. □