

# Sticking point: Choosing the right adhesive for synthetic turf installation is an important part of achieving a top-quality surface

The installation of a synthetic playing surface using the best available turf, pad and base is of little value if the adhesive holding them down fails. The adhesive is usually the lowest-cost component of an installation, yet is extremely important to its performance and longevity, so cutting costs by choosing a low-quality adhesive is a false economy. If an adhesive is chosen based on low price rather than quality, it can lead to short-term savings disappearing when a project is delayed due to weather, or when the adhesive fails after prolonged exposure to weathering. Synthetic Surfaces, a US-based company that has been developing adhesives for sport surfaces for over 40 years, believes that adhesives must be formulated with high-priced, high-quality raw materials, and that those that are thoroughly tested are the most reliable.

For experienced and professional installers, the most trusted and respected adhesives for synthetic turf, recreational, aquatic and military surface projects are solvent-based, one-part, moisture-cured urethanes with a high green strength, which is its grab and bond strength before full cure.

They offer a number of benefits that you don't get with solvent-free or hot-melt adhesives. For example, they can be employed in a wide range of climates and temperatures, from intense desert heat to sub-freezing, do not crystallize or foam, and avoid any curing issues in dry or damp conditions. The adhesive can withstand sudden unexpected rain during installation, offer resistance to fresh and salt water after cure, and can also be shipped and stored in cold temperatures.

## Green king

Expanding further on the properties that set moisture-cured urethanes apart from alternative adhesive options includes the fact they are solvent-based, meaning they offer easier application than liquid solvent-free and hot-melt adhesives, yet are not a hazardous material after the solvent evaporates.

These adhesives can be applied using a number of methods, including by glue box,



Application for cold weather turf using a stand-up squeegee



Adhesive is spread onto seam tape using a stand-up trowel



Airless spray covers large areas quickly and enables the porous pad to remain water drainable



A sideline-to-sideline seam is quickly created by dispensing adhesive through a glue box

trowel, squeegee, roller or spray, and can be used year-round in any temperature the installer is able to work in. This means a greater number of installations can be carried out throughout the year.

Moisture-cured urethanes also boast a high green strength, which is the extremely important physical property of grab, or tack, as opposed to being oily or slippery. This means the adhesive can hold two surfaces down when they are first joined and it is still in its green state, which is the state before the adhesive develops its ultimate bonding properties when fully cured. This is vital for successful outdoor installations as it helps overcome the tendency of surfaces such as synthetic turf to separate, curl, bubble, lift, creep, slip and wrinkle during installation.

As well as being used for sports surfaces, the adhesive's high resistance to fresh and salt water, both from above and when submerged, means it is also widely used in military applications and aqua-bonding.

With proven long-term durability, clients are able to prevent a loss of profit or time replacing turf, whereas many installations that use cheap, inferior-quality adhesives are plagued by a variety of adhesive failures and are also more susceptible to suffer the effects of aging and weathering. ■

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