



Exterior Insulation & Finish System (EIFS)

What is EIFS?

“EIFS” is an acronym for “Exterior Insulation and Finish System.” It is a type of building material that is placed on the outside of exterior walls of buildings that looks like stucco. It provides insulation, weather proofing, and a finished exterior surface in a single product. EIFS is sometimes called “Dryvit” (which is a trade name for a specific EIFS manufacturer) or “synthetic stucco.”

What does EIFS consist of?

A typical exterior insulation & finish system consists of:

1. *Insulation layer* (a layer of insulation attached to the outside face of the building exterior wall with adhesives, mechanical anchors, or both).
2. *Base coat* (a layer of adhesive and mesh reinforcement).
3. *Finish* (the outermost, colored, textured layer).

Why is EIFS used in construction?

One of the primary reasons is that EIFS provides energy savings due to the external location of the continuous layers of insulation. It also adds aesthetic appeal, requires minimal maintenance, and offers a wide range of colors and textures. Properly designed, detailed, and installed, these systems have proven to be very suitable for the Pacific Northwest climate.

Where is EIFS used?

EIFS is one of the most popular types of exterior wall products and can be used on a wide variety of buildings, including but not limited to:

- Single-Family Residences
- Apartments
- Condominiums
- Hotels & Motels
- Shopping Centers & Malls
- High Rises

What are some considerations when selecting an EIFS contractor?

- Is the contractor a trained applicator of the system you’ve chosen? (verify with the EIFS manufacturer).
- How current is the contractor’s applicator training?
- Is the contractor licensed and bonded with the State?
- Beware of EIFS applicators offering cut-rate prices; EIFS is not a system that lends itself to cutting corners.
- Ask for and check several references.

What are the causes of the problems some have had with EIFS?

As with any exterior material, lack of attention to details, poor construction practices, inappropriate uses, and lack of maintenance can lead to problems. Sealant joints are a critical part of the system and must be installed and maintained according to the manufacturer’s specifications and details. When that doesn’t happen, problems can occur.

Is routine maintenance required for EIFS?

Yes. A small investment in maintaining your system pays in the long-term appearance and protection of your home or building. It is important that moisture intrusion (water entrapped in the wall) doesn't occur. It is recommended that sealant around doors and windows be checked regularly for cracks or other openings through which air and/or water could enter. Replacement of the sealant may be necessary.

Who can I contact for additional information about EIFS?

Northwest Wall & Ceiling Bureau
1032-A NE 65th St
Seattle, WA 98115
(206) 524-4243
nwcb.org

EIFS Industry Members Association
3000 Corporate Center Drive
Morrow, GA. 30260
(800) 294-3462
eifsfacts.com

Association of Wall & Ceiling Industries
800 W Broad St #600
Falls Church, VA. 22046
(703) 534-8300
awci.org