

sealed bluestone clouding

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We installed a new bluestone patio with standard cut bluestone and bluestone select stone for coping around our pool. Since installation there has been severe clouding on most of the stone that almost looks like baby powder was poured on it. The clouding in many instances is worse or concentrated around the grout joints, but it is also prevalent on the surface of the stone pieces away from the grout lines. The stone was sealed and we removed all the sealer in hopes that that was the problem, but the same issue came back. Any idea what could be causing this and what we might do to try to solve the problem? Any help or guidance would be appreciated.

Dear Michelle:

Typically bluestone is a good stone for outdoors.

What you have is a severe case of efflorescence.

What could have caused it? Hard to tell, but since bluestone in its natural state is, like I said, a good stone for outdoors, my only immediate conclusion is that the sealer could very well be the culprit. I make sealers, but I always say that no stone should ever be sealed when installed outdoors. Now, why would I ever say that, instead of pushing my sealer? It is simply because I know better, and I care about your stone more than anybody else – that's why!

and we removed all the sealer

I doubt it. First off, if they applied an impregnator, considering how absorbent that stone is it went deep inside at least 3 to 5 mm. How could you possibly remove that? There are only two chances to that: no way and no how!

Second, if instead they used a topical, such as urethane, how did you remove it?... It can't be stripped with a wax stripper, that's for sure. If you used, say Methylene Chloride, then very good chances are that while the stuff was melting and thinning the urethane, part of it got absorbed by the stone.

Either way, I'm afraid that's the end of it.

Even if it were case two and you could somehow manage to remove also the urethane that was absorbed by the stone, once the chemical process that started the efflorescence is on, it's virtually impossible to stop and reverse it.

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Ciao and good luck,

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