



## The DO's and DO NOT's of Installing Polymeric Sand

The introduction of Polymeric Sand to the interlocking paver industry has had a positive impact when the application works as intended.

However when it goes bad it can go really bad. We have compiled a list of in field Do's and Do Not's in an effort to make your experience with these sands a more favorable one.



Riven Viisi™ with Polymeric Sand

### What Is Polymeric Sand?

Polymeric Sand is a high-tech mix of graded sand and binder, specially formulated for the filling of narrow or wide joints when installing pavers, slabs or natural stones, or when replacing existing joints. Unlike conventional sand, it stays in place and remains stable. Using Polymeric Sand has many advantages.

- Optimal strength
- Inhibits weed growth
- Deters ants and other insect infestation
- Resists erosion, water, frost heaving, wind, power washing, etc.
- Retains original paver aesthetic
- Water resistant after 90 minutes
- Stabilizes pavers – Strengthens interlocking

### DO know your application and the specific sand required.

First and most importantly know your application and the specific sand required for the application. There are many different Polymeric Sands in the industry, and many are designed for specific base and joint width conditions. Be particularly cautious when applying to pavers over a non-pervious base element like concrete or a bituminous setting bed. A limited range of Poly Sands work over these types of base conditions. Most are designed for pervious base applications.

Determine the proper sand for the paver joint width. Specific sands are made for pavers with wider joints. Some of the more popular regular sands will not remain stable in wider joint conditions. Rule of thumb is most regular Poly Sands work for a joint width up to 1". Anything over that requires a specific gradation of Poly Sand.

### DO choose the best sand color.

Once you have selected the right sand for your application pick the color of sand most suited. This is typically a personal choice, but we can tell you that over time they will all look very similar. This is not a structural issue but rather just normal dirt's and age that cause the darkening of the Poly Sand.

*Ok here we go, homework finished, pavers installed, all cut pavers and edge restraint in place. Time to sweep, tamp, and water the sand. STOP!!*

### DO NOT apply Poly Sand to damp pavers.

DO NOT apply Poly Sand to a wet or even slightly damp paver or joint condition. Remember this is a water-activated material. If there is any moisture present, the instant the sand makes contact it will activate. Removing the sand is not easy. Be sure your installation is completely dry before applying Poly Sand.

### DO follow the manufacturer's instructions.

Follow the directions on the manufactures packaging. They are thorough and we will provide some additional insight. Sweep the sand using a wide medium course bristled push broom. Force as much sand as possible into the joint. Leave excess Poly Sand on the paver surface as it will help to prevent surface scars on the pavers from the plate tamping operation.

Once all joints are filled by sweeping, use a vibratory plate tamper with rubber pad affixed to tamp pavers in place and force additional sand into the joint. It is important



Slate Grey Polymeric Sand

Beige Polymeric Sand

that the Poly Sand be vibrated into the joint, as we want the sand as tight as possible in the paver joint. In applications over concrete or Bituminous in which the use of a plate tamper is not practical, use a rubber mallet and wooden 2 x 4 to vibrate and compact the joint. Simply place the 2 x 4 over a number of pavers and tamp with mallet moving the 2 x 4 as you go to insure that are joints are completely filled and compacted.

### DO NOT apply water until the surface is sand free.

Be sure all excess sand and poly dust is removed from the surface before wetting. If not you will create a Poly Sand finish on the paver surface.

### DO remove all sand from the paver surface before adding water.

Broom all excess sand off the pavers. Now using a leaf blower, blow over the paver surface to remove the poly dust from the face of the pavers. Use caution not to blow directly into the joint as it could displace some of the sand. The ideal finish sand elevation is to the bottom of the bevel, or if using a square edged paver 1/16" to 1/8" below the top of the paver edge.

*Here comes the more technical part of the application.*

### DO apply water to the sand-free surface to activate.

Apply water at this time to activate the sand. Keep in mind there can still be some fine residue of poly on the paver surface. So the first pass of wetting should focus on the paver surface, using the nozzle in the heavy mist setting, work the spray over the paver surface pushing the water into the joint. This action will remove any surface residue/dust and push it into the joint. On this first pass make sure there is enough water to completely wet the entire joint. You should have water standing in the joint but

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not flowing. If you notice a whitish film in the joint then immediately move to the next area. This is an indication that you have the joint wet enough.

### DO apply water a second and third time.

Apply a second and third wetting. Between each application, time should be given for the application to begin drying.

### DO NOT allow joints to completely dry between second and third water applications.

Do not allow the joint to dry completely before beginning the next application of water as it will reduce the ability for subsequent wetting to reach the full depth of the joint and would create an uncured condition.

The second wetting is generally a little heavier than the first. Again wet to point of joint saturation and move on. Allow the joint to dry slightly before the third wetting.

The third wetting is similar to the second with respect to amount of water. If your sprayer has a shower setting this is usually a good setting for the second and third wetting. A rule of thumb with respect to time between wetting is as soon as the paver surface begins to show signs of drying it is time to apply the second and or third wetting. In most cases three is sufficient. A wider joint may require a fourth wetting.

### DO pay attention to the temperature and weather conditions.

Pay attention to the temperature and weather conditions, as they play an important role in



Olde Hanover® with Polymeric Sand

the sand activation process. On hotter days and if the area is exposed to direct sun, the time lapse between the watering applications will most likely be shorter. If heavy rains are forecast with in 2 to 3 hours of the time you plan to apply the sand you may want to consider waiting. Manufacturers say the sand is able to handle rain within one hour. However, we have seen extensive washout from heavy rains arriving just a few hours after the final wetting.

### DO blow excess water from paver surface with a leaf blower.

With a leaf blower, blow any excess water off the paver surface and into the joint. This is another precautionary measure to minimize the potential for surface staining. The final blowing operation is more important with pavers that have undulant or irregular surface. On these types of pavers, the water, which can have some poly residue in it, can often times lay in the valleys. When it dries a white film is left behind. The final blowing will move this water off the paver surface and minimize the potential for staining.

### DO NOT drive on the installation for 48 hours.

Avoid driving over freshly installed Poly Sand applications as it will negatively effect the curing process of the sand. It is recommend to allow the system to dry for at least 48 hours for vehicular traffic. Temperatures and weather conditions will influence the curing times.

### DO NOT walk on the installation for 24 hours.

Avoid walking on freshly installed Poly Sand applications as it will negatively effect the curing process of the sand. It is recommend to allow the system to dry for at least 24 hours prior to pedestrian foot traffic. Again weather will influence the curing times.

### DO enjoy the finished product!

Enjoy the completed walkway, patio or driveway. If installed correctly the joints will require little if any maintenance over time.



Halifax® Flagstone Mixed with Polymeric Sand

## The DO's

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DO follow the manufacturer's instructions.

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DO apply water to the sand-free surface to activate.

DO apply water a second and third time.

DO pay attention to the temperature and weather conditions.

DO blow excess water from paver surface with a leaf blower.

DO enjoy the finished product!

## The DO NOT's

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DO NOT allow joints to completely dry between second and third water applications.

DO NOT drive on the installation for 48 hours.

DO NOT walk on the installation for 24 hours.

## Polymeric Sand Resources

[www.techniseal.com](http://www.techniseal.com)

[www.alliancegator.com](http://www.alliancegator.com)