

DRYWALL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION OF NEVADA

DCAN-SW

Representing Nevada, Arizona, and California

Drywall Hand Texture and Paint System

Home buyer preference has been gravitating toward deeper tone paint colors, higher grade new technology paints (like scrubable flat or no VOC etc.), and hand textures. A hand textured wall with a high quality paint looks great and buyers love this, however it is important treat the hand texture and paint as a “system” that needs to work together to deliver the desired result.

DCAN has found that in some cases, the binder system in higher end paints, or paints with sheen and darker tones, may exceed the cohesive strength of the underlying hand texture. This becomes evident when the hand textured wall is painted and then the paint starts to blister or flake off as it dries. Then when a repair is attempted and the subcontractor tries to remove the loose paint, the paint peels in large sections. In this case the hand texture under the paint will typically appear powdery and loose. In a similar manner, machine applied textures like knockdown may “chip” off the wall for the reasons described above, although this is not as common.

So what happened? In summary, paint will shrink as it dries. The higher end paints film over as they dry and trap moisture underneath and against the hand texture. This trapped moisture rewets the hand texture, then effectively peels the hand texture free. So whose fault is this? It is the position of the hand texture manufacturers that their job is to bond to the substrate. Prior to paint, the hand texture is typically well adhered to the substrate. Once painted, it is rewet and peeled free by the higher end paints as described above. It is therefore incumbent on the paint manufacturer to provide a paint product that is compatible with hand textures and will not peel the hand texture free as the paint dries.

To mitigate this issue, DCAN suggests using a penetrating primer over hand texture prior to applying finish paints. Products like Sherwin Williams Builder Solution Primer Surfacer or Draw Tite Original or a low cost paint primer diluted 10% with water. These products are able to penetrate into the hand texture and strengthen the bond of the hand texture to the face paper and underlying joint compounds prior to finish paint. As a side note, we have also found that harder drying ready mix joint compounds containing more glue, like all purpose products, perform slightly better than softer topping type products or wall texture in this hand texture application.

As for repairing a home with this condition, DCAN suggests roughing the wall with sandpaper to loosen suspect areas and open the painted surface film, then applying a penetrating primer, then repairing and repainting. Some contractors have also used carpet mask and heat guns to remove suspect areas, then repair and repaint. DCAN has also found that as extended time goes by the suspect areas eventually seem to harden to an acceptable level.

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