

TOOLBOX TALK #2

Painting of Structural Steel

(10 minutes)



QUESTION: What is the fabricator's responsibility when painting structural steel?

The *Code* says...

- 6.4.2 Unless otherwise specified in the *contract documents*, paint shall be applied by brushing, spraying, rolling, flow coating, dipping, or other suitable means, at the election of the *fabricator*. When the term “shop coat,” “shop paint,” or other equivalent term is used with no paint system specified, the *fabricator's* standard shop paint shall be applied to a minimum dry-film thickness of one mil (0.025 mm). Unless specifically provided for in the *contract documents*, the properties of the optional shop coat are at the discretion of the *fabricator*.
- 6.4.3 Touch-up of abrasions caused by shipping and handling after painting shall be the responsibility of the contractor that performs touch-up in the field or field painting.

Commentary:

Touch-up in the field and field painting are not normally part of the *fabricator's* or the *erector's* contract.

TOOLBOX TALKS

If you're using structural steel, the *Code of Standard Practice for Steel Buildings and Bridges* (ANSI/AISC 303-22) applies to your contract.

Simply put, the AISC *Code* defines who's in charge of what, when, where—including before any potential conflict arises—and other members of your project team are already using it in their own contracts. Download it for free at aisc.org/code.

Section 6 of the *Code* provides the requirements for painting of structural steel and should be referenced during preconstruction for managing these activities with your fabricator and/or erector.

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Garbe Iron Works

6.4.4.

The *fabricator* is not responsible for deterioration of the shop-applied paint when the paint is exposed to atmospheric conditions or corrosive conditions that are more severe than the intended use of the paint; or when painted members are stored for unanticipated durations due to project delays not caused by the *fabricator*. Handling damage or damage during transportation is not the responsibility of the *fabricator* unless the painted material is under the direct control of the *fabricator* or a subcontractor of the *fabricator*.

Commentary:

Paint systems are designed by the manufacturer to perform for a specific amount of time in specific environments. The appropriateness of a paint system and its required application is provided in the paint manufacturer's technical data sheet. If the painted material is used or stored in conditions that are beyond the paint system's design intent and the *fabricator* can show that they followed the directions of the paint data sheet, the *fabricator* is not responsible if the system fails to perform.

It is common practice that the *fabricator* temporarily stores the painted material at their plant or a third-party coating subcontractor until it is loaded for shipment. Once the painted material leaves the direct control of the *fabricator* or a subcontractor of the *fabricator*, the *fabricator* cannot be held responsible for damage.

Need help
understanding
the Code?



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