

Post installation guidance for Gypsol flowing screed

Up to 72 hours

External windows and door openings should remain closed in order to allow the screed to set and to protect it from ingress of water and extremes of temperature. The screed may be trafficked by light foot traffic after 24 to 72 hours from installation. Significant air movement across the screed should be avoided in order to reduce the risk of plastic shrinkage cracking. Keeping the internal environment at or around 20°C is also beneficial.

Gypsol screed should be protected from the extremes of temperature during the early part of its life. Typically, the first 24 to 72 hours is critical so during harsh weather conditions extra protection may be required. During hot weather the temperature inside the building should be maintained at below 30°C for the first 24 to 72 hours following installation. Very hot temperatures can lead to the screed drying prematurely and cracking. During cold weather the temperature inside the building should be maintained at above 5°C for the first 24 to 72 hours following installation. Very cold temperatures can lead to the screed freezing in situ leading to setting issues and cracking.

From 24 hours to 7 days

After 24 hours the Gypsol screed is ready to begin drying. It is of significant benefit at this stage to provide as much ventilation as is reasonably practicable, whilst maintaining protection for the screed from ingress of external water. Windows and doors can remain open for as long as possible, assuming conditions allow, during the working day. This will help to provide good air exchange to remove moisture from the air above the screed and allow the residual moisture to escape. After 72 hours dehumidifiers may be introduced to assist the drying process if desired. Between 72 hours and 7 days any loose or friable surface laitance may be removed by lightly sanding with a rotary floor sander and a medium grit sanding disc or other suitable means of removal. **(This is not applicable with our Gypsol ZL range).** Foot traffic can continue during this period.

After 7 days

The Gypsol screed can now be loaded (make certain no pallets, plywood etc... are left for long periods of time on the surface as it will delay hydration of the screed) and the work area returned to full service. Gypsol screeds can be force dried either using the underfloor heating, or using space heaters and fans. In either case it is important to remove the moisture from the air above the screed either by ventilation, extraction or dehumidification to allow the screed to dry properly. This assists greatly with early preparation for floor coverings. If space heaters are used these should not be of the fossil fuel variety e.g. gas burners as the burning of gas emits moisture back into the air reducing the benefit of heating significantly. Electrical or forced air movement heaters are suitable.

The underfloor heating has to be commissioned. This can be done after 7 days and run in accordance with manufacturers guidance. It is critical that UFH is commissioned before any final floor finishes are applied.

[Please refer to specific UFH manufacturers guidelines](#)

Drying times

The most critical parts of the drying process for any screed are the site conditions, screed depth and internal environment that the screed is placed in. Drying times can be greatly increased under conditions of low temperature and/or high humidity. In these conditions it can be worth noting that the most critical parts of the drying process for any screed are the site conditions, screed depth and internal environment that the screed is placed in. Drying times can be greatly increased under conditions of low temperature and/or high humidity. In these conditions it can be worth taking measures to actively manage the internal environment to assist the drying process as previously described. Once dry protect the screed from moisture ingress.

Sanding and surface preparation

There are two occasions on which liquid screeds may require “abrasion” to the surface. These two are often confused but are in fact completely different. The first occasion is an early-stage process and is for the purpose of removing loose friable laitance from the surface, post screed installation; generally priced by the screed contractor. The amount of laitance and the degree of adhesion to the surface will influence the difficulty of the process and the severity of the sanding but, if carried out at the correct time 3 to 10 days post installation, (timing dependent on the site conditions) it is seldom a difficult task. Not all liquid screeds require this post installation sanding as not all liquid screeds form a surface laitance. **(This is not applicable with our Gypsol ZL range).**

The second occasion where light mechanical abrasion may be required is for the final preparation prior to installation of floor finishes as per the Contract Floor Association & British Standards etc, where mechanical abrading is recommended. This abrasion should be carried out by an agreed specialist contractor immediately before installation of soft flooring or tiling to ensure a clean, absorbent surface ready to receive the final floor covering adhesives. The degree of floor preparation required at this time will depend on many factors from: the quality of the screed surface and its porosity, the amount of site contamination on the screed, the specific floor finish and the adhesives/ primers being proposed. Some floor finishes, such as LVT, are very unforgiving of even very small defects and imperfections to the extent that some manufacturers will insist on a levelling compound regardless on the type of screed. The surface of a liquid screed should however be sufficiently smooth and flat for the vast majority of floor finishes.

Moisture testing

In line with Contract Floor Association & British Standards recommendations, moisture testing should be carried out using a suitable approved method such as a flooring hygrometer or carbide bomb test. Due to the potential inaccuracies of using hygrometers at high humidity levels a direct measurement should be used such as Carbide Bomb or oven dried sample.

Prior to floor covering installation

In accordance with the relevant national standards for floor coverings the surface of the screed should be inspected by the flooring contractor and should satisfy the following: 1. It should be clean and free from chemicals likely to interfere with adhesion 2. It should be sound, hard and free from fractures other than planned joints 3. It should be free from loose friable laitance, dust, construction debris and loose surface contamination e.g. mud, building adhesive and bricklaying mortar 4. It should be suitably dry, generally to 75RH or 0.5% moisture content, or an approved method of moisture management such as a damp proof membrane or uncoupling technology employed. 5. Any underfloor heating must have been commissioned and run.

If the floor requires priming, a product should be selected that is suitable for use with Gypsol (calcium sulphate or anhydrite) screeds. Damp proof membranes can be used on Gypsol screeds subject to manufacturers guidelines / instructions. Technical guidance should always be taken to ensure that products are specified correctly and are compatible with Gypsol screeds.