

Don't be Stuck with Synthetic Stucco

Painting Plus of Marietta specializes in replacing EIFS with Hardie Plank Siding.

Oh, No—Synthetic Stucco!

Like a number of siding products, asbestos insulation, lead paint and polybutylene plumbing in preceding decades, some Exterior Insulation and Finish Systems (EIFS) have raised a red flag to realtors and potential homebuyers. Because it has the appearance of traditional stucco or concrete, EIFS is commonly referred to as *synthetic stucco*. This multi-layered exterior is generally formed by applying a fiberglass reinforced mesh embedded in cementitious adhesive to a foam sheet, then top-coated with a textured paint-like material in a number of colors. First popularized in European reconstruction after World War II, contractors deemed it to be good repair material to retrofit war damaged masonry buildings. U.S. builders began using EIFS in the 1960s, first in commercial buildings, and then within two decades, EIFS had become a popular energy efficient wall system on residential construction.

So what went wrong? EIFS layers bond to form a covering that does not breathe *and your house needs to breathe*, inhale and exhale. In the absence of moisture EIFS presents no problem, but when moisture seeps behind the EIFS product it becomes trapped and continues to do what water does in dark, warm places—rot wood, grow molds and mildew, corrode metals, and feed insects. Stagnant moisture in the structural heart of your home is hazardous. Used on masonry walls EIFS is a perfect application, but applied to wood-laden structures, it yields an undesirable result. As in the past, the industry learned from this performance failure and responded with more viable solutions to today's obstacles.

The HardiePlank® Solution

HardiePlank® is a brand name for a cement-fiber exterior siding material that has become a popular alternative to wood, composite, and vinyl sidings. Originally formulated to withstand the extreme climates of



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Australia, HardiePlank® products are impermeable to the most common forms of water, wind, temperature, and rot which makes it a popular replacement material for the problematic EIFS. Unlike EIFS, however, HardiePlank permits air circulation and does not inhibit drainage. Available in a multitude of sizes and shapes, from lap boards with a wood grain texture to smooth sheets, panels with scalloped edges and cedar shake, the James Hardie line of cement-fiber products are fire, hail, hurricane and termite resistant, and lead the cladding industry in being “green and sustainable.”

Meet Charlie Dallavalle

In an era of service industry lethargy and complacency where consumers frequently experience the frustration of mass-produced goods (often cheaper to replace than to repair) and shoddy, indifferent workmanship, it is refreshing to encounter a company that still appreciates the value of customer satisfaction. Charlie Dallavalle, Jr., owner of Painting Plus Inc., learned the importance of delivering quality service while a young man growing up in his uncle's construction business in Ocean County, NJ. By the age of 17, Dallavalle was an accomplished estimator and project supervisor, fully grasping the essentials of small business success. Upon graduating from the University of Georgia with a dual degree in Business Management and Marketing, Dallavalle applied the lessons learned as a young man to his formal education and opened his own business. A local Marietta resident, Dallavalle is an expert at replacing defective siding/EIFS with HardiePlank and the full line of James Hardie products.

Painting Plus

A Georgia licensed general contractor, in the metro Atlanta area since 1998, Painting Plus specializes in EIFS replacement and HardiePlank installation, full roof replacement systems, and seamless gutters as well as interior and exterior painting. With their business in its 10th year, they take great pride in the fact that they have established and maintained an excellent standing with both the Cobb Chamber of Commerce and the Better Business Bureau of Georgia. “We understand that to remain financially sound we must grow and generate profitable business by exceeding our customer's expectations 100 percent of the time,” Dallavalle explains.



A critical component in accomplishing such a challenging goal is the constant pursuit of the emerging industry technological and product advances. “Reinvesting in our company has always been, and will continue to be, our top priority with respect to future growth,” insists Dallavalle. But the emphasis most important to business growth and customer expectations is placed on recognition of current trends, techniques and alternative materials. “We are proud of the fact we are authorized installers for HardiePlank, Owens Corning, and GAF/Elk roofing manufacturers,” exudes Dallavalle.

“At Painting Plus we pride ourselves on simple basic core beliefs including respect for the individual—our customers, workmen and material suppliers. Because referral and repeat business is our core growth we strive to provide value, honesty and commitment to our customers by marketing our product knowledge, excellent service, and business vision.”

What differentiates Painting Plus from their competition in addition to their selection of cutting-edge products, according to Dallavalle, is their competency as a one-source contractor positioned to accommodate customer needs from project concept to completion. “Our customers deal with only one company,” explains Dallavalle. “Our team of estimators, Kent Pochmara, Charles Dallavalle, Sr., Anthony Dallavalle, and Eric Covington, are also project managers through project completion. We understand the importance of when our customer signs our contract; they want to deal with the person who sold them their project. We believe communication throughout all aspects of our customer's projects is our biggest asset.”

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If you are interested in having a free in-home consultation for any of your home improvement needs, call 770.971.1577 or visit www.paintingplus.com.

Photography by Jack Tuszyński.