



by Allison Hester

Seal 'n Lock

In 1989, when pavers were just becoming popular, Rich Colletti owned a small landscaping supply and paver installation business in the Northeast.

Pavers – a.k.a. interlocking concrete pavements – are a “special dry mix, pre-cast piece of concrete commonly used in exterior hardscaping pavement applications” (Wikipedia). Pavers are used in patios, walkways, driveways and other outdoor hard services. Pavers “are installed over a compacted stone sub-base and a leveling bed of sand.” The sand particles are used instead of grout to stabilize the pavers, which allows for a little breathing room so the pavers do not crack, break or buckle as easily as poured concrete.

That’s not to say pavers are without problems!

When Rich and his family moved to Florida in 2003, he was introduced to paver sealing, which provides a barrier to protect the paver from wearing down to the aggregate. Some sealers also stabilize the joint sand, which tends to dissipate with time, causing the pavers to move.

However, in those days, paver sealing was causing huge problems. “There had been nothing but complaints and lawsuits from

pavers turning white, and probably a 95 percent failure rate in the sealing industry,” he explained.

Because Rich had spent several years as a contractor and was very familiar with the use of pavers, he was asked by a Florida-based paver manufacturer to see if he could correct the sealing-related problems. That’s when Rich entered into the sealing industry.

After studying what was available on the market, he realized that “with all the products available, there was no way contractors could be successful in sealing.” Instead, he took a different approach altogether, creating a new type of sealing system now known as Seal ‘n Lock.

The Introduction of Seal ‘n Lock

For the past nine years, Rich has focused on creating products that are different from those one the market. He worked with three different chemists to create the Seal ‘n Lock “All in One Day Process,” which made it possible for contractors to pressure wash, re-sand, and apply two coats of sealer within one day.

Additionally, Seal ‘n Lock products: **Are non-toxic.** Whereas a solvent-based

sealer has 600 grams per liter of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), Seal 'n Lock's Super Wet 2-Part Urethane has 31 grams.

Eliminate the downtime between cleaning and sealing. Most products on the market require the contractor to pressure wash one day, then wait to allow plenty of drying time, then return to seal. This, in turn, leads to the next advantage.

Abolish the problems with pavers turning white from moisture. As Rich explained, the long wait time between cleaning and sealing leads to other issues. "The problem is that the moisture and/or upcoming rains will turn pavers white." The Seal 'n Lock product removes the need to wait and prevents the pavers from turning white due to trapped moisture.

Stabilize the sand joints. If the sand joints are not stabilized, the pavers start to move and fail. "The sand is the final interlock," Rich explained. Standard acrylic-based solvent products seal but don't stabilize. Water-based joint-stabilization sealers do not provide the sealing enhancement that customers desire. Seal 'n Lock does both – seal and stabilize. Additionally, Seal 'n Lock's "ultra low water base system" enhances the longevity of the paver protection, leading to happier customers.

Working with Pressure Washing Contractors

For the past seven years, Seal 'n Lock has worked with pressure washing contractors and organizations such as the PWNA. (They are also members of the UAMCC, International Concrete Paver Institute, the Southern Society for Coatings Technology, and the Florida Paint & Coatings Association.)

"The pressure washing contractors have been the best market for us. They already have the equipment, they know how to clean properly, and many of their customers already have concrete and pavers," said Rick. "Adding our sealing system as an add-on to their business has been a great match, and makes us both successful."

When Rich entered the paver sealing industry 10 years ago, there was no training

available from any company – "and that has been the biggest part of the failure rate.," he explained. "I realized that as easy as our products are to use, education and training still play a big part in success. So, our policy is not to hand a pail of sealer to a contractor without training and technical support." And Seal 'n Lock offers technical support 24/7.

Seal 'n Lock provides free training seminars around the country, and will be leading part of the PWNA's Flatwork certification course during this Fall's Annual Conference and Trade Show, October 17 through 19 in Orlando. "I always believed in education as the key answer for anyone's success. The PWNA provides strong educational offerings and I want us to be part of it," he stressed.

More on the Horizon

Seal 'n Lock recently added a research and development chemical engineer from Europe – "probably one of the best chemists in the world" – and built a new blending facility earlier this year. As such, the company has never been stronger or had more to offer.

"Now we are producing photocatalytic coatings, anti-graffiti coatings, our bio-Stripper, degreasers – and have much more to come," Rich explained. "We have always taken pride in building a product as a contractor for a contractor, and not just a bucket of 'marketing margins' or 'stuff on the shelf.'"

To learn more about Seal 'n Lock's company and products, visit their website at www.SealNLock.com. To register for the PWNA's Flatwork/Paver Sealing certification course in October, visit www.PWNA.org.

