

# Efflorescence

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Foundations often have deteriorated concrete surfaces. The deterioration is most often caused by periodic wet-dry-wet-dry exposure to moisture over many years. The mechanism is this: the base of the wall gets wet, and some of the water penetrates the concrete, carrying dissolved salts picked up from the soil, or the concrete. The salts remain in solution until the moisture reaches a surface that is exposed to air. As the water evaporates into the air, the salts are left behind and form crystals in the surface of the concrete, as the crystals grow, they exert enough pressure on the surrounding concrete matrix to break it up. The damaging action is always at the surface of the remaining sound concrete.