

ACRYLIC SURFACE LONGEVITY

During difficult financial times, owners in both the private and public sectors seek ways to economize on construction and maintenance costs. This is understandable. What is not understandable is when the attempt at economic savings results in significantly reduced longevity and compromised athletic performance of the acrylic tennis surface.

Acrylic surface manufacturers learn, from both laboratory and actual field experience, the anticipated life expectancy of their system. These results are proven and achievable. The ideal performance and longevity of acrylic systems are achieved when installed in accordance with the specification by a well trained installer. Significant changes by the installer will yield different results.

Most contractors are able to achieve acceptable appearance with significantly less material than specified by the manufacturer. What is not possible is to achieve an adequate film thickness of product that will provide the expected longevity. This is where a common language is required for owners, inspectors and installers.

The first step is to obtain the manufacturer's suggested application process. This will include preparation steps which insure adhesion and uniformity as well as the volume of product required to effectively surface the court. It is not about how many coats of product are applied, it is about the total number of gallons applied. This figure is normally expressed in tenths of gallons per square yard (.1 gal./sy.). With this figure, an inspector can determine if adequate material is available to properly surface the tennis court. (example: one court = 800 sy X .1 gal./sy = 80 gals.)

Applying the correct amount of material is the key to achieving a 5+ year life expectancy versus a less than 5 year life. The effort to investigate, specify and inspect is worthwhile to the facility owner. It also prevents radical differences in proposal responses.

An acrylic tennis court is the most affordable sport surface available today. It is 10% of the cost of a gym floor but can provide an excellent recreational surface for many years.

It is worthwhile to do things right. Budgets are always tight. We can respond by doing the work correctly.