

# the CONCRETE INFORMER

## Featured Products



**SAKRETE® 5000 Plus** is a commercial grade, pre-blended, ready to use concrete mix. **SAKRETE® 5000 Plus** can be used anywhere regular concrete mix is needed, but is specially formulated to achieve a higher compressive strength and faster setting time than normal concrete mix.



**US SPEC Winterset** is a calcium chloride chemical admixture. It quickens the hydration of portland cement mortars and concrete resulting in shorter setting times. **US SPEC Winterset** provides improved workability, helps prevent segregation and contains rust inhibitors to slow the corrosion of metal.



**SAKRETE® Sand Mix** is a pre-blended, ready to use mixture of masons sand and Portland cement packaged in a convenient bag. **SAKRETE® Sand Mix** can be used for patching and leveling floors, steps, walks and other concrete structures. **SAKRETE® Sand Mix** is also an effective overlay and cap for cementitious surfaces.

### Mountain States Show March 14, 2014

US MIX will be participating in the Mountain States Show again this year. The show is Friday, March 14th at the Denver Merchandise Mart. Shannon Chisholm as well as other US MIX team members will be attending. Be sure to stop by our booth to chat, hear about this year's show specials and enter to win one of our giveaways. See you there!



## Finishing Concrete

Have you ever seen a sidewalk poured with new concrete and watched someone finish the concrete? You probably didn't pay a lot of attention but you noticed someone down on their hands and knees with a trowel moving around the concrete surface. Like everything else that is done by someone with experience, it looked easy. Guess what? It's not that easy unless you have done some homework.

If you haven't done this before or only done it a few times you are likely to make two mistakes; troweling too soon and troweling too much. Both of these have the effect of pulling fines and water to the surface. This can lead to a weakened surface, tiny cracks and a white dusty surface. To avoid those, follow these steps. After thoroughly mixing the concrete pour it into the forms slightly overfilling them. Then take a straight board (a 2x4 piece of lumber works great as long as it isn't bowed) and simply level off the concrete. Using a board that is longer than your pour is wide and using a sawing motion work back and forth until the concrete is level. You really need someone on the other side to help with this part. This is called "screeding". With a wooden trowel or magnesium float, smooth off the surface, this should only take a few minutes. This step is simply to put a relatively smooth surface on the concrete. When you are done, go clean your mixer and tools and get something to drink. Keep an eye on the concrete. The first thing you will notice is that some bleed water will come to the surface which is a good thing. Allow all of the water to disappear before you do anything else. This can take 20 minutes or 4 hours depending on the temperature, humidity and how hard the wind is blowing.

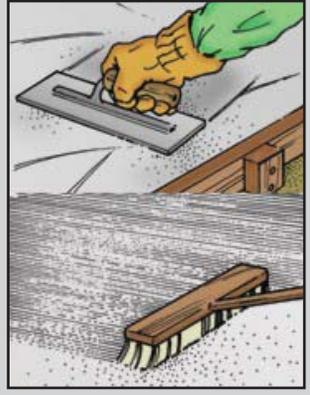


After the bleed water is all gone you can get out your steel finishing trowel and put on the final touches. You will notice the steel trowel is not perfectly flat. That is done so that when you trowel you will be more prone to lift the leading edge slightly avoiding digging into the concrete.

*continued on back...*

## Finishing... (cont. from front)

Even following these instructions, it is doubtful that your surface will look a pro did it. As I said in the beginning, using a trowel isn't all that easy. However, most of us are good with a broom. Once you are finished with the trowel, simply take a soft broom and gently drag it across the surface. Always pull the broom (never push) and always go in the same direction. Just one pass should do the trick. I personally prefer a broom finish because it makes the surface slightly rougher. This is very helpful for those occasions when your sidewalk is wet. A hard troweled surface is very slick; you don't want someone take a tumble. Besides this way everyone will think you really knew what you doing and you won't have to tell them about the broom trick.



Don't stop reading yet or you will miss one very important point. You need to "cure" the concrete. If the concrete isn't kept moist for a few days it may crack. The problem is that the surface will dry out while the bottom is still wet causing tension which basically tears the concrete apart. There are several ways to cure concrete. The easiest is to simply spray it very lightly with a hose. You can cover it with a wet cloth such as burlap (don't let the burlap dry out). Or you can use chemical curing agents. The question of how long to do this and how often is a tough one because it depends on temperature, humidity and air flow. The hotter, dryer and windier it is the more you will have to re-apply water.

**The Sakrete® Team**

www.usmix.com  
303.778.7227  
Denver, CO 80223  
112 South Santa Fe Drive



## Where to Buy SAKRETE®

SAKRETE® has launched a new feature on their website ([www.sakrete.com](http://www.sakrete.com)) called "Where to Buy SAKRETE®". It is now easier than ever for customers to find a store or specific products close to them. Simply enter a zip code, specify a mileage range and/or specific product to be shown the nearest results(s).

US MIX has worked with SAKRETE® to include our customers in the search engine while also listing products that are being carried. This information has not only been entered for distributors in Colorado but also around the country as SAKRETE® has many different plant locations in the US.

Visit [www.sakrete.com](http://www.sakrete.com) or [www.usmix.com](http://www.usmix.com) and follow the SAKRETE® link to check out this helpful, new tool.

