

# enCOUNTER™

**enCOUNTER** countertop mix is a special blend of rock, well medium and fine graded sands, cement and proprietary performance enhancing ingredients. **enCOUNTER** can be used for either the cast-in-place method or pre-casting.

ADVANTAGES: enCOUNTER offers significant advantages over other countertop materials: endless color options; minimal shrinkage, easily takes any shape; and can be a structural material capable of long unsupported spans. enCOUNTER readily accepts color hardener, integral color, reactive acid stains and water borne stains. enCOUNTER can cantilever where other natural materials or bagged mixes may need permanent support. The lower water demand of enCOUNTER minimizes shrinkage cracking while providing workability. The lower water content also minimizes curling, a common issue with some mixes.

enCOUNTER is available in 50-pound bags of white or gray mix. Nine liquid integral colors are available with an easy-to-use measuring and dispensing system. enCOUNTER readily accepts any integral color, reactive acid stains and water borne stains.

enCOUNTER's high early strength gains allow polishing sooner than some other mixes. An added benefit of polishing is that it exposes the white limestone rock.

8,870 psi in 28 day with water – no admixtures necessary.

COVERAGE RATES: Coverage rate are approximately per 50-pound bag: 3 sq. ft. at 1.5" thick; 2.3 sq. ft. at 2" thick.

CAUTION: Keep out of reach of children! Use appropriate personal safety protection gear such as particle masks, eye protection and gloves. Avoid direct skin contact and inhaling dust. Do NOT subject enCOUNTER bags to moisture prior to use.

MIXING: Make a sample with enCOUNTER to gain familiarity and suitability for your casting method, colors and sealers. A metal drum mixer is recommended. Please read these instructions carefully!

Add 80oz. of water per bag and enCOLOR to the mix water and then add the bags of enCOUNTER. If you are mixing in 4 bag batches stop the mixer after the third bag has mixed in order to scrape any dry material from the sides and paddles of the mixer. Add the fourth bag and continue mixing. Add one ounce of water per bag until the desired consistency is reached. When the mix tumbles off the paddles of the mixer the slump is just right. Avoid adding more than 88 ounces of total water per bag. Allow a minimum of 3 to 5 minutes mixing time for enCOUNTER to wet out before adding more

water. Record the amount of water added per bag to more efficiently mix the second batch.  
*Note:* enCOUNTER is wetter than it looks and works more easily than it first appears. The suggested amount of water is suitable for hand pressed, precast and cast in place applications. Adding more than the recommended amount of water will encourage shrinkage and curling.

**COLORS:** enCOUNTER comes in gray and white. enCOUNTER takes integral colors, acid stains and water borne stains. Color hardener may also be used however enCOUNTER's low water content will make the application more difficult than with regular concrete.

#### REINFORCEMENTS:

1. Place 4 X 4 X 6 gage welded wire mesh in the center of the countertop section.
2. Use pencil rod or #3 bar ¼" below surface at all reentrant corners and narrow strips, ie...sink and range areas.
3. For extremely long sections or unusual applications consult with an engineer.

#### FINISHING TIPS:

1. Float the enCOUNTER mix to the edges, filling in all voids.
2. Screed and float the surface. Consolidate the edges with a palm sander or pencil vibrator. Re-float the surface. Allow the concrete to take an initial set before steel troweling. Avoid burning the surface with a magnesium float or steel trowel. Apply a micro-topping for additional smoothness after final troweling or add texture by "sweat" troweling.

#### CURING:

1. An effective curing method is to cover the surface with 1 mil poly after final troweling leaving at least overnight.
2. For longer cast in place projects keep the surface wet and covered for as long as practical. Allow sufficient dry time before sealing.

*NOTE:* These recommendations take on added significance when using enCOUNTER outside. Refer to ACI 305 Hot Weather Concrete since high temperatures, sun and wind cause rapid moisture loss which may result in surface checking and possible shrink cracking.

**POLISHING:** Allow the concrete to cure for a minimum of 4 days at normal temperatures before polishing. Consider using a liquid densifier to strengthen concrete. Start polishing with a diamond cup wheel or something equivalent, this will help with the leveling and breaking the surface without using up your other pads. Either use wet or dry pads. If using wet pads, start at 40 grit and end with 100 grit. If using dry pads, start with 100 going to 200 grit, 400 grit, 800 grit, and finishing with 1500 grit. Use a micro-topping to fill voids near the end of the polishing process.

#### SEALING:

1. Seal using two coats of penetrating sealer and two coats of food-grade concrete beeswax. The beeswax will penetrate the surface and enhance the color. Apply beeswax regularly for maintenance.
2. A minimal maintenance option is using 100% epoxy. Follow the instructions carefully.
3. Encourage the owner to use hot pads and cutting boards to avoid damaging the wax or sealer.



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