



MULCH MATTERS

A Newsletter for the Landscape Coatings Industry

Proper cure time is the remedy to many customer complaints



One of the biggest customer complaints about colored mulch is wash-off.

While there are various reasons mulch could lose its color, the primary culprit is that the colorant has not had adequate time to cure on the mulch fiber.

Curing is the actual bonding of the colorant to the mulch and is not to be confused with drying. Product that appears to be dry may not be cured.

Curing can only occur in the landscape setting after the mulch has been applied. There are steps mulch producers and retailers can take to ensure the best quality.

- Minimize the amount of water during the manufacturing process, which will reduce cure time.
- Don't ship mulch immediately after it's manufactured. BASF recommends waiting 24 to 48 hours and to turn mulch piles one to two times. Some producers have piles that are too big to turn and should educate retail yards on the importance of turning.
- Give mulch more time to cure when it's cold out. It can take weeks to cure in the cold.

It's worth noting again that mulch will only fully cure in the landscape setting. Most wash-off complaints occur when it rains soon after mulch is applied. Landscapers and homeowners need to be aware that they should lay down mulch when the weather forecast shows dry conditions for the next day or two.