

MEMBRANE DRY LINING WITH DAMP-PROOFING

Information Sheet (MDL1)

Membrane dry lining is a unique, clean to install, and quick drying internal wall finish that can be used as an alternative for hard wall “wet” plastering systems. Its three components are a membrane, plasterboard (or insulated plasterboard) and plaster skim finish. The whole structure is mechanically fixed to masonry walls with plastic fixing plugs. The first two of these are dry components, hence the name dry lining. The third component, skim plaster, is the only “wet” item in the process. As skim plaster is applied thinly, the capacity of membrane dry lining to dry out is quick - much faster than conventional hard wall plastering. The membrane completely isolates the plasterboard from moisture and salts, so membrane dry lining is very suitable for residually wet and salt contaminated walls, or walls that may get damp from time to time.

Dry lining is not “tanking” and will not hold back a head of water, and so alone cannot be used to provide waterproofing to below ground structures, where there is a risk of physical water entry through masonry, which might result in flooding.

NOTES:

1. Dry Lining Thickness

We can usually accommodate membrane dry lining into the thickness of normal hard wall plastering, when hard wall plaster has been removed. However, sometimes if the original plaster thickness is thin, we have no option but to add a bead to the wall (like a dado rail) or extend the membrane dry lining to full height. Normally we can create a finish that runs neatly into the old original plaster that we have not removed above. You should note however, that the joint between the two will usually be noticeable.

2. Plumb and Level

It is difficult to plumb and level membrane dry lining, as it is applied to walls as rolls of membrane and sheets of plasterboard. The skim plaster can take out minor undulations, but in general, this finish follows the line and level of the wall it is applied to. This is the standard finish we offer.

Plumb and level can be achieved by battening out the wall over the membrane and adding plywood strips to build out the battens so they are plumb and level. This is time consuming, costs more, and is generally not a requirement in most wall finishes. Of significance is the thickness of this construction, which is far thicker than our conventional membrane dry lining specification. Where plumbed and levelled membrane dry lining is carried out, replaced carpets may need to be trimmed to get them to fit.

3. Perished Plaster

Where rising and / or penetrating damp has occurred, the action of rising water carries mineral salts, (chlorides, nitrates and sulphates) from the ground into masonry and leaves them as salt deposits in the masonry and plaster. Most original hard wall plasters are unable to cope with this contamination.

Where this has occurred the plaster may have perished because the salt deposits will have attracted moisture from the air causing damp patches of varying severity, depending on the humidity of the atmosphere.

Even though the introduction of a damp-proof course will control further rising damp, damp patches may still occur on the walls and it is therefore essential that all perished plaster is removed. This plaster removal and replacement is normally carried out at the same time as the damp-proof course installation. Membrane dry lining allows walls like this to be immediately covered over internally, speeding up the remedial process.

Because membrane dry lining completely isolates plasterboard from what is in, or on, the wall behind it, it is common for sound plasters to be left in position, even though they might show some signs of damp and salt contamination.

4. Plaster Cracking

For membrane dry lining, plasterboards are mechanically fixed over the membrane. Plasterboards are butt jointed, and the joints are taped with scrim tape. This reduces the chance of cracking. However, a too fast drying out process may force cracking to develop on the board joints, or where the membrane dry lining meets the original plaster. These are usually hairline cracks, which can be decorated out, and will certainly be covered by wallpapers. Any larger cracks in the membrane dry lining surface should be reported to us **BEFORE** you go ahead and decorate, as they may need our further attention.

5. Skirting Boards

Where it is necessary to remove skirtings to install the damp-proof course or to carry out membrane dry lining, it is highly probable that sections of skirtings may be found to be affected on the reverse side by fungal decay, which cannot always be detected at the time of the survey. Any replacements found necessary in this case may be charged as an additional cost item, if not already specifically included as part of the report / contract.

6. Lateral spread of damp

Sometimes the application of membrane dry lining to a wall causes damp that was in a particular location to spread into other areas. This occurs because membrane dry lining slows down the ability of the surface on which it is applied to lose moisture. It is therefore possible for damp to spread laterally in to walls that have not been treated, or into adjacent materials in contact with the masonry that has been covered. An example of this might be the underdrawing plasterboard below an exposed staircase or a plasterboard ceiling section.

We cannot predict this occurrence, but it can be repaired if it takes place. We make normal charges for this type of work.

Applying membrane dry lining to party walls (with your neighbour) might cause similar problems to the neighbour's side of the wall. This would result in neighbour having problems with damp that they have not had before. This is an unusual occurrence, but you need to be aware of this possibility.

Usually, membrane dry lining applied in conjunction with a chemical injected damp proof course produces very satisfactory results. We have ten years of experience of doing this without issues.

7. Joints to existing plaster

Where new membrane dry lining meets the original plaster, there will be a joint. We try to minimise the impact of this visually, but the joint is always detectable.

Some wallpapers do mask this, but you should expect there to be a joint that you can see. If a joint is unacceptable within the finished membrane dry lining and plaster finish then the wall will need to be skim plastered to full height. There will be additional costs for doing this. This requirement should be notified to us **BEFORE** the work commences.