COMPARE SURFACE OPTIONS IN EXPOSED DECK AND BALCONY SYSTEMS

One of the most important decisions when building or remodeling a deck or balcony is the surface finish. We often refer to a deck surface that serves as the finished pedestrian traffic surface as an **Exposed System**.

Exposed Systems can be Vinyl, Concrete, Wood, Composite, Fiberglass, and various Liquid Coatings. Not all Exposed Systems are waterproof by themselves, so when looking at options for roof decks or decks that must stay dry below, many builders will consider a Protected System. *(*note – a vinyl deck membrane can be both the waterproofing component AND the traffic surface).*

Most Exposed System decking products will have maintenance considerations and all will age over time as they are 'exposed' to the elements. The cost for material, installation, and maintenance varies region to region, so please do your research to ensure you are choosing the best system for your project requirements, installation conditions, and maintenance budgets.

How are you going to protect the structure that you have invested a substantial amount of time and money on?
Decks and balconies are tied into the building envelope which is one of the most important elements of a building to protect. Our commitment is this: *Duradek products are only installed by trained, professional applicators to ensure the job is done right the first time!* But that's not the only thing that sets Duradek apart from other decking materials.

Compare Exposed System decking product features below:

	Duradek	Concrete	Wood Drip Deck	Composite Decking	Fiberglass	Liquid Coatings	Flakes over Liquid Coating
Moisture	Excellent waterproofing, but if penetrated, moisture can gather in any airspace it finds beneath. Intended for pedestrian traffic and very resistant to penetration. Full adhesion limits the ability of water to travel.	Concrete is not waterproof by itself. Without some form of waterproofing, moisture can penetrate and reach the reinforcing steel which will rust, destroying the integrity of the structure.	Is not a waterproof system. Water drips through and the space beneath is not protected. Once moisture has seeped into the wood, it can warp, shrink, or split.	Designed to be moisture resistant but water still drips through and the space beneath is not protected.	Fiberglass is strong and waterproof. If resins are not mixed perfectly and installed in ideal conditions, fiberglass can crack or delaminate allowing moisture to enter the system causing deterioration.	Designed to waterproof but moisture that penetrates or that is trapped can cause any coating to bubble, blister, or peel which allows more moisture to penetrate the system.	Moisture that penetrates or that is trapped can cause any coating to bubble, blister, or peel which allows more moisture to penetrate the system.
Rot/ Deterioration	Vinyl will not rot. The wooden structure beneath is susceptible to rot if water penetrates the vinyl. Susceptible to high heat and UV exposure over time.	Concrete cracks and spalls (where chunks come loose due to rusted rebar or freeze/ thaw movement).	Any time a wooden structure is left to the elements it will, through natural process, eventually rot or deteriorate.	Will not rot, but is not resistant to mold and mildew, especially in shaded areas. Composite boards are susceptible to heat and UV and can warp. Moves at a rate different than the wood substructure.	Fiberglass will not rot. The wooden structure beneath is susceptible to rot if moisture gets in the cracks.	Moisture trapped underneath the coating can accelerate rot.	Moisture trapped underneath the coating can accelerate rot.

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Maintenance	Regular cleaning will prolong life. No topcoats necessary. Relatively attractive. Heat welded repair if necessary. Very resistant to damage.	Concrete has a porous surface so dirt and mildew will cause staining. A sealant or coating will need to be applied regularly to minimize water intrusion and keep the surface appearance.	In an effort to prolong a wood deck's life, staining or painting should be performed. This process needs to be repeated at least every other year, and even then, may not prevent deterioration.	Composite decking is susceptible to scratches. While easy to clean, scratches and gouges are difficult to repair without replacing individual deck boards.	Top coat or color coat may need maintenance every 5 – 7 years or sooner, depending on UV exposure. Any recoating requires complete surface abrasion. Regular inspections for cracks are recommended.	Liquid coatings need to be reapplied on a regular basis, at least every 2-3 years. Repairs are problematic due to color match as surface materials are blended by hand on each job.	The rock/sand surface may be coated with a clear epoxy or polyurethane finish to bind it in place. This requires a regular recoat every 2 - 3 years.
Cracks	Highly elastic, Duradek moves with the building and will not crack.	All concrete cracks due to normal expansion/ contraction. Cracks allow moisture into the system. Cracks cannot be prevented (whether it has a sealant or not). The waterproofing system has to accommodate cracks.	As wood ages it will crack and split allowing moisture to enter. With wood there is always a possibility of splinters.	Composite decking is unlikely to crack or splinter but will scratch, and tends to sag, bend, and warp even more than wood.	Fiberglass is a rigid material. It expands and contracts at a rate different than the wooden substructure. This can cause cracks or delamination. Common for cracks at posts, pillars and upturns.	Liquid coatings are designed to bridge cracks. Special treatment is required at each plywood joint and is often visible. Cracking/movement may surpass the coatings elasticity.	Liquid coatings are designed to bridge cracks. Special treatment is required at each plywood joint and is often visible. Cracking/movement may surpass the coatings elasticity.
Installation Conditions	Duradek can be installed in almost any temperature but must be applied to a dry surface. It can be used immediately.	Concrete takes up to 90 days to cure to reach its design strength. Caution must be taken in applying any waterproof coating prior to full curing.	Any coatings applied requires dry lumber and dry conditions for optimal results. Surfaces need to be thoroughly prepared, old coatings removed and sanded.	Anytime - unlike a wood deck, composite does not require coating.	Fiberglass must be installed in optimum conditions onto perfectly dry substrates. Its final quality is entirely dependent on job site conditions and skill level of the applicator.	Surfaces must be dry and moisture/ temperature condition must be optimum for good results. Time between coats is critical in multi-coat systems and cannot be walked on until properly cured.	Surfaces must be dry and moisture/ temperature condition must be optimum for good results. Time between coats is critical in multicoat systems and cannot be walked on until properly cured. Dust and dirt can get trapped under the top finish.
Does It Meet Roofing Standards?	Yes	No - not without an approved roofing membrane covering it.	No - a wood drip deck can be installed over an approved roofing membrane. See Protected Systems.	No - but can be installed over an approved roofing membrane. See Protected Systems.	No - to the best of our knowledge there are no roofing approved fiberglass products.	Yes - some specific brands are approved when installed to manufacturers specifications.	Yes - some specific brands are approved when installed to manufacturers specifications.

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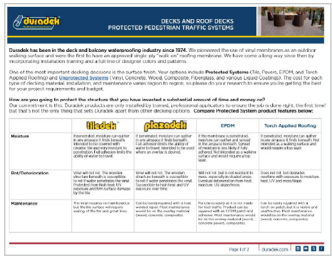
Pedestrian Safety	Textured surface provides slip resistance.	Depends upon the roughness of the surface or the type of material applied to the surface.	Depends upon the surface conditions, possible slipping, splinters, and rot.	Each product will come with a specific slip resistance rating. Some may be more slippery than others.	Surface characteristics can be smooth or abrasive with the addition of an abrasive to the top coat. Highly slip resistant surfaces are much more difficult to clean.	Coatings can be applied with differing levels of slip-resistance. Highly slip resistant surfaces are much more difficult to clean.	Coatings can be applied with differing levels of slip-resistance. Highly slip resistant surfaces are much more difficult to clean.
Fire Resistance	Class A on cement board or concrete; Class C on plywood.	Non-Combustible material	No - Extremely combustible.	Some Class A, some are not rated.	Non-Combustible material Class I flame spread rating of 25 - no fiberglass products are classified for roofing.	Some coatings meet class A, some meet class C, most are not rated	Class A
Life Span	20+ Years	50+ Years	8+ Years dependent upon regular coating, maintenance, and climate.	15+ Years depending upon its quality.	25+ Years	Completely dependent on recoats.	15+ Years

Duradek has been in the deck and balcony waterproofing industry since 1974. We pioneered the use of vinyl membranes as an outdoor walking surface and were the first to have an approved single-ply “walk-on” roofing membrane. We have come a long way since then by incorporating installation training and a full line of designer colors and patterns.

Discover the Duradek Difference.



Compare waterproofing options for Protected Deck and Roof Deck Systems.

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