

Dear Friend,

Each month, BOWA Home Advisor provides you with important tips on how to improve and protect your home's value. We hope the following is helpful.

**Does your concrete know you care?**

With a minimum of maintenance, concrete sidewalks, steps and driveways can provide many years of service.

To maintain a durable concrete surface that will be relatively free of blemishes throughout its service life, homeowners should follow these recommendations:

- Do not drive on new concrete for at least seven (7) days.
- Apply a concrete sealer at least 30 days after placement of the concrete and preferably before the first freeze. Quality sealers provide protection to the concrete surface where harmful materials, such as de-icing salts, may be inadvertently deposited. While you should be sure to use a product from a reliable manufacturer and apply as directed, it is generally recommended that the sealant is applied when the surface is dry and ambient temperatures are above 50 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Do not allow drain water to undermine the slab, as it may cause settlement cracks over time.
- Refrain from using de-icing chemicals (salt or calcium chloride) for snow and ice removal during the first winter. Instead, sand can be used for traction as needed.
- Never use de-icers containing fertilizer ingredients, such as ammonium sulfate or ammonium nitrate.
- Concrete should be protected from exposure to liquid fertilizer systems used on lawns.
- As many substances can damage or discolor concrete if left in place over an extended period of time, a regular

sweeping and rinsing with a garden hose is recommend. If stains are stubborn, a high-pressure spray or detergent may be needed.

Even though concrete is extremely durable, homeowners should keep in mind that slight cracking is a natural occurrence with concrete and, while it may be unsightly, it does not mean that your concrete is inferior.

For more information about concrete care and applications, visit Virginia Ready-Mixed Concrete Association at www.vrmca.com.

Excerpts were supplied by Cardinal-Virginia Concrete Company and Virginia Ready-Mixed Concrete Association.

For your convenience, past issues of the *BOWA Home Advisor*, are available in the 'About Us' section of our [web site](#).

If you would like more information on any of these topics or if there are other ways we can be of service, please contact [BOWA Builders](#).

Regards.



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P.S. Have a specific issue you would like addressed in a future BOWA Home Advisor? Please [let me know](#).

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