

NOTICE REGARDING THE APPLICATION OF CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES TO THATCHED ROOFS

The Thatchers Association of South Africa has noted an increase in enquiries and complaints regarding certain chemical products applied to thatch roofs.

We request that members of the Association and the general public research and investigate any chemical substances properly before application, as certain products may have an adverse effect on the life span of the roof. Please also note that application of chemical substances to thatched roofs must be repeated every five to seven years, and that a thatched roof must first be served beforehand as explained on page 71 of the "A Guide to Thatch Construction in South Africa" to make sure amongst other things that the compaction, which is an important factor, is tight.

Phrases which to note with caution are:

- Waterproofing properties

It is almost impossible to waterproof a thatched layer with a chemical or coating without hindering the thatched layers ability to "breathe". Proper thatching techniques ensure that any water ingress into the layer does not penetrate far enough to cause water to go through the thatched layer. Any product which claims to waterproof the thatched layer will obstruct the moisture trapped in the grass from drying out. This stagnant moisture can cause the premature decay of the thatched roof.

- Extends the life of the thatched roof

There are no known and environmentally safe spray-on chemical substances which are able to drastically extend the life of a thatched roof. Certain products may assist initially but will soon wear off with the thatched layer it was applied to.

- Prevents dust

Again, blocking of the natural air flow through the thatched layer can trap in moisture which can negatively impact the life the thatched roof.

- Prevents bird and monkey damage

There is a known case, with a judgment handed down from the Advertising Standards Authority, against a company which claimed that bird and monkey damage could be prevented by applying a certain product. These types of applications are not effective.

- SABS approved

Or

- SABS tested

In relation to chemical or coating products for thatched roofs - the SABS Standards Act of 2008 strictly prohibits the unauthorised use of the SABS mark in respect to a commodity

which is likely to create an impression that the commodity has been approved by the SABS. The use of the terms SABS TESTED, SABS APPROVED, and or SABS COMPLIANT are to be considered unlawful trademark infringements. Any product purporting to be SABS APPROVED or SABS TESTED or SABS COMPLIANT should be reported to the SABS legal department for investigation.