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Hycrete: Cheaper Buildings Through Better Concrete April 28, 2009 at 12:37 PM

Perhaps the biggest hurdle in green building is credibility. Contractors and architects simply don't want to try new materials. And who can blame them? Buildings have to last three decades or longer and parts or components can't easily be swapped out if something goes wrong. Lawsuits are also endemic to the industry. In California, liability can continue for a decade. (Before becoming a writer, I represented major property developers.)

Trusting a startup, therefore, is akin to asking for more holes in your head.

Hycrete, though, is building up a case list of projects that it says will demonstrate how its product — a concrete additive that waterproofs concrete — cuts costs. The cost cutting comes because Hycrete's chemicals effectively replace the need to wrap a foundation or other concrete structures in plastic. (Hycrete CEO David Rosenberg will speak at our [Green Building Summit](#) on June 11.)

"We can cut 30 to 60 percent of the cost (of waterproofing) on just materials alone," said Aaron Ayer, who recently joined the company to run marketing.

It can also speed up a project by one to four weeks. Membranes, he added, also rip.

Can Hycrete make its case? I don't know, but it will be a signal that many in the industry will watch. The company was one of the first [green building](#) (and green chemistry) companies and it has already landed some notable deals. So remember those numbers and see what the company says later.