

# Processing instructions V 1.4

## REFRACAST<sup>®</sup> MW, LW

Note: Please read the product information sheet first, to ensure that these are the right processing instructions for your product. This document describes the application procedure for lightweight **REFRACAST<sup>®</sup>** refractory concretes of the types **MW** and **LW**.

The instructions contained in this document must be complied with during processing and installation of the respective refractory concrete. Modification of or deviations from the processing instructions can lead to major problems during installation, and possibly to total failure of the installed refractory material. These instructions provide general guidelines for storage, processing, and installation of the specific refractory material. If, due to specific site conditions, it appears necessary to deviate from the procedures described here, please consult Refratechnik Steel GmbH before starting work.

### Storage

- In general: Store under cool, dry, and frost-free conditions.
- The shelf life stated in the product information sheet is valid from the production date, and only if storage is in accordance with our recommendations. The production date is stated on the packaging label.
- Under certain circumstances, material that has been properly stored may still be usable even after expiry of the stated shelf life. In such a case, conduct a setting test with a sample before using the material. In case of doubt, the expired material can be checked by Refratechnik Steel GmbH.
- Incorrect storage can greatly reduce shelf life, and can impair product quality.
- The original pallet wrapping foil should be left intact for as long as possible to protect the product. However, the foil is not a substitute for storage under cover.

- Also standing water, e.g. due to inadequate drainage of the storage area, can damage the material.
- Stacking of the goods supplied by us (in sacks, Big Bags, etc.) is done under the sole responsibility of the shipping company or customer. Refratechnik Steel GmbH accepts no liability for possible consequential damage (damaged packaging, personal injury, etc.).

### Health and safety

- Always wear suitable safety goggles, dust mask, protective clothing, and working gloves.
- Always wash thoroughly after working with the material.
- Observe the information in the safety data sheet.

### General information

- This product is a hydraulically setting lightweight refractory concrete. Curing occurs at room temperature.

- Always mix complete packaging units (1 sack or 1 Big Bag). The use of partial quantities can lead to demixing and changed material properties.
- Only use clean drinking water, as otherwise the setting behaviour may be affected.
- Low temperatures can retard or even stop the setting process. Therefore, the temperature of material and mixing water must be at least 5 °C. In some cases, it might be necessary to heat the installation area.
- On the other hand, the setting process may be significantly accelerated at temperatures above 25 °C.
- Please take the expansion of the refractory material for your specific furnace application into account. The reversible and irreversible expansion values and the respective material properties are given in the product information sheet. Depending on the furnace operating conditions and the specific characteristics of the refractory material, any arising stresses and pressures must be

compensated by suitably designed expansion joints.

- During installation of the monolithic refractory material, please ensure correct anchoring to the existing furnace structure and/or to the existing or adjacent refractory material (e.g. with steel anchors, ceramic anchoring systems, etc.).
- Suitable measures must be taken to ensure that the water or water vapour generated during the drying & heating up process is removed from the refractory lining without pressure build-up.
- With certain furnace structures and refractory linings, the drying process can cause water or water vapour to diffuse outwards in the direction of the furnace shell instead of inwards to the hot side (furnace chamber). Therefore, suitable measures must be taken to ensure that the water or water vapour can escape to atmosphere. For this purpose, 10-mm holes drilled into the outer furnace surface (at least 5 per m<sup>2</sup>) have proved to be successful.
- In order to ensure a continuous drying process, the entire furnace chamber must always be flushed with an adequate amount of fresh air during the entire drying and heating up procedure. The air circulating in the furnace chamber may never be saturated with moisture.

#### Mixing

- Mixer, tools, conveying equipment, etc. must be clean and free from any form of contamination.
- We recommend the use of a positive mixer, but this is not essential.
- Mix only as much material at a time, as can be processed within about 20 minutes.
- Data on the maximum and minimum amounts of water to be added is given in

the product information sheet or on the packaging label.

- First, briefly mix the dry material for about 30 seconds to restore the consistency after any demixing that might have occurred during transport.
- Next, add the minimum amount of water while continuing to mix the material. Continue mixing for about 2 minutes until a thorough mix is obtained.
- Frequently, the required consistency is obtained only at the end of the mixing period, because the fine portions in the product must be broken down first. Therefore, you should wait until the full mixing time has elapsed, and don't try to obtain the required consistency in a shorter time by adding more water. The material's consistency can change quite abruptly from "too dry" to "exactly right". If necessary, the remaining amount of water can be added until the required consistency is obtained. Hereby, the maximum amount of water may not be exceeded.
- Then continue mixing for about 1 more minute.
- Do not mix longer than the recommended mixing time, as otherwise the lightweight additives can suffer mechanical damage.

#### Processing

- If using formwork, make sure it is sufficiently stable, and that its surfaces are smooth. Use formwork release oil.
- While casting the concrete, no moisture may be drawn out of the material by adjacent dry and absorbent surfaces. Therefore, any existing refractory lining should be pre-wetted. Any moisture-sensitive materials, such as insulation, should be covered with foil.
- While casting the material, or shortly afterwards, the concrete must be com-

pacted by rodding or vibration (e.g. with an internal vibrator).

- Because with lightweight refractory concretes, high thermal insulation is more important than high strength, internal vibrators must only be used for a short time to prevent mechanical damage to the lightweight additives. To prevent air inclusions, withdraw the vibrator slowly from the concrete.

#### Setting and curing

- Monitor the concrete's temperature during the setting process. To a greater or lesser extent, heat is always generated in the concrete during setting.
- Due to high heat generation, some of the water in the lining can evaporate, resulting in incomplete setting, thereby reducing the ultimate strength of the refractory concrete.
- To prevent high temperatures due to heat generation, the surface of the lining must be kept wet and cool. This can be achieved by covering the surface e.g. with jute, and lightly wetting it with a water spray at regular intervals.
- Generally, it takes between 6 and 12 hours before the concrete has cured sufficiently to permit removal of the formwork. Ambient temperatures in mid-summer may considerably shorten this time, while winter temperatures or the use of material stored in cold places may lengthen it.
- Of course, the formwork may only be removed after the material has fully cured. The right time to do this can be determined reliably by means of a «ring test»: Lightly strike the accessible face of the lining with a small hammer. As curing proceeds, the tone changes from «dull» to «bright». A bright tone, which no longer changes, is generally an indication that the formwork may be removed.  
**Caution:** In some cases, the lining core may not yet be solidified, even though

the outer face of the casting is fully set. If in doubt, always allow the full recommended curing time of 24 hours.

- Full setting of the refractory concrete requires at least 24 hours. Until that time, the concrete must be protected from frost.

#### **Drying and heating up**

- We recommend that drying or heating up is not started before 24 hours after the end of installation. In some cases, however, an earlier start of drying and heating up may be acceptable. Please contact Refratechnik Steel GmbH in such cases.
- Please check the product information sheet to ensure that you have the right heat-up instructions for your product.
- The heat-up instructions must always be followed precisely. Hereby, it must be ensured that the respective heating curve is followed, monitored, and rec-

orded by means of several correctly-positioned thermocouples. Moreover, a homogeneous temperature distribution must be ensured throughout the refractory lining.