



# JOBSITE ADDITION OF WATER

## WHAT IS JOBSITE ADDITION OF WATER?

Jobsite addition of water is the addition of water to ready mixed concrete in a truck mixer after arrival at the location of the concrete placement. Such tempering of concrete may be done with a portion of the design mixing water which was held back during the initial mixing, or with water in excess of the design mixing water, at the request of the purchaser.

## WHY THE ADDITION OF WATER AT THE JOBSITE?

When concrete arrives at the jobsite with a slump that is lower than allowed by design or specification, water can be added to the concrete to bring the slump up to an acceptable or specified level. This can be done when the truck arrives on the jobsite, as long as no more than 60 minutes have elapsed from the time of batching as shown in the delivery ticket to the start of discharge, and the specified slump and/or water cementing ratio is not exceeded. Such an addition of water is in accordance with CSA A23.1, Concrete Materials and Methods of Concrete Construction (Clause 18.4.3.1).

The jobsite addition of water is often used to compensate for a real or perceived lack of workability which makes the concrete difficult to place and/or consolidate. The ready mixed concrete supplier designs the concrete mixture according to industry standards to provide the intended performance. Addition of water in excess of the design mixing water will affect concrete properties, such as reducing strength (Figure 1) and increasing its susceptibility to cracking. If the purchaser requests additional water, in excess of the design mix the purchaser assumes responsibility for the resulting concrete quality. The alternative of using a water reducing admixture (or superplasticizer) to increase concrete slump should be considered. Provided segregation is avoided, increasing the slump of concrete using admixtures usually will not significantly alter concrete properties.

When adding water to a load of concrete, you may affect the air content. Refer to Concrete Tech Tip 15 for further information.





## HOW TO ADD WATER AT THE JOBSITE:

1. The maximum allowable slump of the concrete must be specified or determined from the specified nominal slump plus tolerances. CSA A23.1 specifies the following tolerances:
2. Prior to discharging concrete on the job, the actual slump of the concrete must be estimated or determined. If the slump is measured, it should be on a sample from the first 20L of discharged concrete. This result is used as an indicator of concrete consistency, it is not an acceptance test. Tests for acceptance of concrete should be made in accordance with CSA A23.2-5C. The sample should not be taken from the first or last 10% of the load.
3. At the jobsite, water should be added to the entire batch so that the volume of concrete being tempered is known. A rule of thumb that works reasonably well is 5 litres, or 5kg, of water per cubic meter for 25mm increase in slump.
4. All water added to the concrete on the jobsite must be measured and recorded on the delivery ticket.
5. CSA A23.1 requires 30 or more revolutions of the mixer drum at mixing speed after the addition of water.
6. The amount of water added should be controlled so that the maximum slump and/or water cementing ratio, as indicated in the specification, is not exceeded. After more than a small portion of the concrete is discharged, no further water is permitted to be added.
7. Upon obtaining the desired slump and/or maximum water cementing ratio, no further addition of water on the jobsite is permitted.
8. A preconstruction meeting should be held to establish proper procedures to be followed, to determine who is authorized to request water addition, and to define the method to be used for documentation of water added at the jobsite.





## JOBSITE WATER ADDITION:

1. Establish the maximum allowable slump and water content permitted by the job specification.
2. Establish or determine the concrete slump from the first portion of concrete discharged from the truck.
3. Add an amount of water such that the maximum slump, or water cementing ratio according to the specification, is not exceeded.
4. Measure and record the amount of water added. Water in excess of that permitted above should be authorized by designated representative of the purchaser.
5. Mix the concrete at mixing speed to produce a uniform mix.
6. Do not add water if:
  - a. the maximum water cementing materials is reached,
  - b. the maximum slump is obtained
  - c. the load has already been retempered
7. If superplasticized concrete falls below the specified slump, special precautions should be taken when retempering the load.