



# 10 Great Tips For Long-lasting Concrete

At Paragon we have a considerable following in the DIY market. We're happy to work with you to improve your odds at great looking concrete for years to come. Hopefully this tips list will make your job easier and have your concrete able to stand the test of time.

*Mark Danhausen - Owner Paragon Concrete*

**Tip 1** - Remove the old concrete without disturbing the sub-grade (earth and material underneath) too much. Usually the ground underneath is pretty solid from years of compaction. Take advantage of that by treading lightly on the sub-grade.



Properly graded and compacted moist sub-grade is essential for a concrete driveway's longevity.



**Tip 2 - Use Air Entrained Concrete** with a minimum of 4000psi. Be sure to include Paragon Performance Fiber, as well as proper expansion and control joints. These things keep concrete from breaking by relieving “mass stress”. The bigger the block of concrete the more stress it endures and the more likely it is to break. Proper expansion and control joints reduce the likelihood of “mass stress” to greatly improve your odds of better looking concrete in the years to come.

NOTE: Maximum 5” slump concrete (the stiffer the mix the better).



“Slump” Concrete should not flow out like a warm shake. It should flow out more like thick oatmeal. If your concrete flows off the truck quickly you didn’t get it from Paragon.



“Paragon Performance Fibers” are highly tested polypropylene fibers meeting and exceeding the highest recommendations from the American Concrete Institute. For the small up-charge it absolutely makes no sense to install concrete without it. Demand “Paragon Performance Fiber” from your contractor and/or be sure you request it. Check out our Youtube Channel to see real life tests with and without our performance fibers.

### **Tip 3 - Many Hands Make Light Work**

On the day of the pour have plenty of help! The faster the concrete is placed the better

### **Tip 4 - Use proper Finishing techniques and tools**

Rent the right tools for the job. We can help you with that at Paragon Performance Concrete. Call 248-623-0100 and we can tell you what exactly you will need.

### **Tip 5 - Timing is Everything -- Never finish bleed water back into the concrete surface.**

Water will appear on the surface, this is called bleed water. Wait until this water dissipates before finishing the surface. If you add water to the top of finished concrete you will get scaling. Scaling is the result of overly hydrated concrete materials creating weak "water bonds". Your concrete will end up "pocked" (little craters all over) if this happens. This also is why though it may make finishing a job easier, you DO NOT want to use water on top of just poured concrete. Keep water bottles away from the job site so no one cheats during the finish process...



### **Tip 6 - Properly "Paragon Cure and Seal" your finished product**

Quality "Paragon Cure & Seal" can be purchased and delivered by asking you Paragon Rep. We can also refer you to reputable companies in your area that will come and properly apply our specially *formulated for Michigan*, "Paragon Cure & Seal".

### **Tip 7 - Don't Believe the Myth that *Concrete is great because you just pour it and it lasts forever.***

It is true as far as we know that concrete lasts many lifetimes. However in the way you'd treat a wood deck with yearly maintenance to get the most out of it, you need to do the same if you want to keep your concrete looking good. Our specially formulated "Paragon Cure & Seal" properly adheres and protects your concrete surface. It protects against insidious road and vehicle chemicals as well as helping your concrete to cure and repel water - it's natural enemy.

[Paragon Concrete](http://www.paragonconcrete.com) | Waterford, MI | 248-623-0100

### Tip 8 - Concrete Takes 28 Days to Cure

Keep all vehicle traffic off newly poured concrete for a least a month



# 28 Days

### Tip 9 - Skip the Salt, Control The Fertilizer

Lawn Fertilizers should be kept off your new concrete for at least a year. So be sure that when it gets put on you don't over-broadcast the lawn products with them ending up on the new concrete. As for de-icers (salt, sodium chloride etc.) they should be kept off as long as possible but at least for the first year.

### Tip 10 - If Looking At A Contractors Work (references) Look Toward Older Driveways

New driveways often look pretty good but how will they look in a few years? How about 6 or 7 years later? Consider though that part of the concrete looking good years later requires the homeowner's participation in maintaining it with the previously mentioned best practices - Paragon Cure & Seal, Keeping vehicles off of it for at least 28 days, de-icers and fertilizer.

**BONUS TIP** -- If you can afford it - hire a pro. Remember we are a concrete supplier - not concrete installers. We've a solid list of contractors to refer you to if you choose the professional contractor route. We supply high performance concrete but it's up to the pro's to make it look great and last. Call our dispatcher for a couple great recommendations 248-623-0100.