

# A Letter to Architects from the U.S. Geological Survey

## **THERE IS A DIFFERENCE IN KINDS OF SLATE**

Please refer to the Federal Specifications SS-S-451 which states that the classification of Dale (in the U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin #586, Page 188), shall be taken as a guide for the Federal Specification. Dale lists Buckingham® Slate as unfading.

Some slate producers, other than Buckingham® Slate, domestic and foreign, claim their slate qualifies as an unfading slate even though there is a slight to severe color change over the years. Any slate that changes in color cannot be classified honestly as an unfading slate, and these statements are misleading to the architects and specification writers. Buckingham® Slate is a Genuine Grade-A Unfading Slate, and we will guarantee in writing that Buckingham® Slate will not fade, will not disintegrate, and will always match any future addition to any previous job. According to the U.S.G.S. Bulletin #586, Page 147, "IN TEXTURE, DENSITY AND CAPACITY OF RESISTING ATMOSPHERIC AGENTS, IT CAN SCARCELY BE EXCELLED BY A SIMILAR MATERIAL IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD."

THERE IS A DIFFERENCE IN KINDS OF SLATE, Buckingham® Slate is classified as a mica slate with continuous layers (Micaceous Matrix) with marked aggregate polarization. This quality of continuity in layers makes Buckingham® Slate practically non-absorbent with a rate of .01 to .08.

There are other slates on the market that have some mica content, but are without the continuity of mica layers and contain sufficient FeCO<sub>3</sub> (Ferrous Carbonate) which causes fading upon exposure to weather. There is clay slate and limestone slate on the market, and the architect should be selective in specifying slate. With the large content of clay and lime in some slates, the fading often starts from ten to fifteen years, whereby, a light whitish cast will form on the face of the slate. This is due to the absorption of moisture which causes the lime and clay content to react causing the disintegration cycle.

We recommend the specification to read, "slate shall be Genuine Grade A-Unfading Blue-Black Slate" as produced by the Buckingham® Slate Company, (P.O.Box 8) 715 Arvon Rd., Arvon, Virginia 23004-0008. Maximum absorption rate shall be .08.

**BUCKINGHAM®**  
EST. **SLATE** 1867

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