

Protective coatings come in a wide range of formulations, prices and performance features. Too often, attention is focused solely on keeping first costs low. Are facility managers really saving money when they select paints or coatings based on first costs? What is the long-term implication of a lower-quality product being applied?

Are premium coatings worth the extra money? What benefits do they provide? If you simply look at price per gallon, premium coatings often seem more expensive. Price per gallon, however, does not tell the whole story. You can only determine true costs by calculating how much the coating cost per unit. Once this calculation is completed, you can make a more informed decision on whether to purchase a coating product.

Conventional liquid coatings include both volatile and solid components. When the coating is applied, the volatile components evaporate and the solids are left behind on the surface. The cost of that solid fraction is what you need to figure to accurately compare the costs of coating products. The cost of the solid fraction can be calculated from information provided in the product's Material Safety Data Sheet (SDS) or Product Data Sheet (PDS), which are available from manufacturers. The paint's total per-gallon cost is divided by the solids percentage to obtain the cost per gallon of solids.

#### **EXAMPLE**

If a protective coating costs \$70 per gallon and contains 67 percent solids then you would divide 70 by .67.  $70 \text{ divided by } .67 = \$104.47$ , the cost per gallon of the paint solids.

If another protective coating costs \$90.00 per gallon and contains 100 per cent solids using the above formula divide 90 by 100.00 = \$90.00, the cost per gallon of the paint solids