



# CHRISTENSEN'S PLANT CENTER

## Wholesale Supplier To Landscape Professionals

## Slag vs 2NS

Lately I have been asked about the differences between slag and 2NS for a paver or wall bedding base. So first let me tell you the difference between the two.

Slag is a by product of smelting iron ore, which separates the desired metal ore from the unwanted metals and other materials. Slag is usually a mixture of metal oxides and silicon dioxides. However, slags can contain metal sulfides and metal atoms in the elemental form.



2NS sand, or "sharp sand" as it can be called, is a natural product that has been washed, leaving it free from any foreign debris such as clays and dirts. The sand is 3mm in size and should pass through a #6 sieve, but not a #8 sieve. The sand is not weathered, giving it the "sharper" corners to lock and bind better.

The difference between the two products' functional characteristics are negligible. Both sand and slag will hold its compaction the same, and hold their tolerances the same. Most landscape suppliers will have both of these products. Slag may cost a few dollars more than 2NS, but not by much. However, if it is a large job you might be planning, the few dollar difference could add up quite quickly.

There is one big difference between the two products, and it has nothing to do with compaction or tolerances. All brick manufacturers will no longer warranty their products if you use slag sand. The manufacturers only want you to use 2NS sand. Their argument is that there is a chemical reaction from the slag and the exposed surfaces of the product to the slag. The reaction causes the paver or wall to slowly deteriorate, which in time could give you integrity failure. I have not personally seen this happen, nor have heard from any contractors complaining about this concern. If you have had this issue before however, please call me, or better yet, samples would be great. I am not saying you should change your installation habits, but more of a thought to keep in the back of your mind. And since 2NS sand is less expensive, all natural, and works as well as slag, this little bit of insight might help beat out other quotes.



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