



Pre-Painted Steel TECHNICAL BULLETIN #2

Guidelines for Field Maintenance of Pre-Painted Metal Roofing & Siding

2.0 Introduction.

While factory-applied finishes for metal building panels are so durable that they will last many years longer than ordinary paints, it is desirable to clean them thoroughly on a routine basis, especially when the finish is not washed by rain. Cleaning will generally restore the appearance of these buildings and render repainting unnecessary. An occasional light cleaning will also help maintain an aesthetically pleasing appearance.

Examples of applications requiring maintenance cleaning and inspection include roof cladding, soffits, wall cladding under eaves, garage doors and the underside of eave gutters.

Washing should be done at least every six months and more frequently in coastal areas where marine salt spray is prevalent and in areas where high levels of industrial fallout occur. Mild solutions of detergents or household ammonia will aid in the removal of most dirt, and the following are recommended levels:

1. One cup of detergent (example - Tide®) which contains less than 0.5% phosphate, dissolved into five gallons of warm water. (*NOTE: The use of detergents containing greater than 0.5% phosphate is not recommended for use in general cleaning of building panels. NEVER BLEND CLEANSERS AND BLEACH.*)
2. One cup of household ammonia dissolved into five gallons of water (at room temperature).

Using either solution and working from the top to the bottom of panels, use a well-soaked cloth, sponge, brush (with very soft bristles) or low-pressure spray washer to clean the surface. Application should be gentle to prevent shiny spots. We do not recommend the use of scouring powders or industrial solvents, since these agents may damage the paint film. Solvent-containing cleaners, such as Fantastic®, are very effective and can be used without concern. If mildew or other fungal growth is a problem and cannot be removed as outlined above, household bleach mixed at a concentration of one gallon of bleach to five gallons of water together with one cup of a mild soap (e.g. Ivory®) to aid wetting is recommended. The surface should be thoroughly rinsed with clean water after cleaning to remove traces of detergent.

All exposed metal areas, such as scratches, are susceptible to rust and should be spot-painted with touch-up paint. Also, accumulated debris such as metal particles, leaves, branches, trash, dirt, pollution fallout, etc., should be removed. This removal and the regular cleaning of surfaces by hosing will help prevent the settling of localized areas where accelerated corrosion might occur. Accumulations of wind-borne salty deposits in seaside locations can have a particularly aggressive effect on metal products. These salty deposits are readily removed by a gentle hosing with clean water.

Any technical information or advice in this bulletin is provided without charge as a service to the industry. The use of this information or advice may produce unexpected results, and any persons intending to make use of this information are urged to carry out tests of their own to satisfy themselves they are using the correct materials, approach, and techniques. Correctly following the information and advice should produce a satisfactory result but Cascadia Metals assumes no responsibility whatsoever in relation to such information or advice. Please ensure you have the most current Technical Bulletin.
