

CARE & MAINTENANCE OF ANODISED SURFACES

The life of an anodised finish can be greatly enhanced by the adoption of a regular documented maintenance programme. Any chemical attack on decorative surfaces which is not regularly cleaned becomes increasingly severe and after several years, may be impossible to restore.

A regular cleaning and maintenance regime is essential for two very good reasons:

- To maintain a decorative appearance and to reduce any chemical attack, if applicable
- Anodised surfaces are cleaned to remove dirt, grime, grit, atmospheric pollutants and iridescence.

The frequency of such cleaning will depend on many factors including the:

- Geographical location of the building.
- Environment surrounding the building, e.g. marine, industrial, alkaline or acidic etc
- Levels of atmospheric pollution including salts.
- Prevailing winds and the possibility of air borne debris causing erosive wear of the coating, e.g. sand causing abrasion.
- Protection of part or all of the building by other buildings.
- Change in environmental circumstances during the lifetime of the building, e.g. if rural became industrial.

Cleaning should start at the time the products are installed, ensuring that construction materials such as concretes, plaster and paint splashes are removed before they have a chance to dry. Failure to remove these materials at this early stage will require the use of aggressive cleaning materials and techniques with potential damage to the powder coated surface.

The best method of cleaning is by regular washing of the coating using a solution of warm water and non-abrasive, pH neutral detergent solution. Surfaces should be thoroughly rinsed after cleaning to remove all residues. All surfaces should be cleaned using a soft cloth or sponge or a soft natural bristle brush.

The frequency of cleaning depends in part on the standard of appearance that is required and also the requirements to remove deposits that could, during prolonged contact with either the anodise film or the metal substrate (if exposed), cause damage.

In severe environments, such as industrial or marine, the normal frequency of cleaning should be at a maximum of three monthly intervals. However, where high atmospheric pollution exists, such as salt spray, or a combination of factors above, the environment is classified as hazardous and the period between cleaning should be increased to monthly.

Sheltered areas can be more at risk of coating degradation than exposed areas. This is because wind-blown silt and other pollutants may adhere to the surface and will not be cleaned away with rainfall. These areas should be inspected and cleaned if necessary on a more regular basis.

Non-Hazardous Environment	Clean and inspect every 12 months
Tropical Environment	Clean and inspect every 6 months
Swimming Pool and Leisure	Clean and inspect every 6 months
Marine Environment	Clean and inspect every 3 months
Industrial Environment	Clean and inspect every 3 months
Hazardous Environment	Clean and inspect every 1 month

THE FOLLOWING ARE THINGS TO DO

1. Protect exposed aluminium surfaces until all wet trades etc. have been completed.
2. Any cement or acid should be removed as soon as practical. This will prevent any chemical attack.
3. When cleaning, wash down all surfaces with a neutral detergent and rinse thoroughly.
4. Remove awkward deposits on ANODISED aluminium, with a suitable nylon abrasive cleaning pad or brush, plus neutral detergent, and then rinse.

To clean long neglected areas it is advisable to use proprietary cleaners specifically formulated for aluminium surfaces. These products contain residual waxes etc. and can substantially improve the appearance of worn or weathered surfaces.

THE FOLLOWING ARE THINGS NOT TO DO

1. Use of wire brushes, steel wool, and emery paper are NOT recommended under any circumstances.
2. Avoid mechanical damage from scaffolding, bad handling, etc.
3. Do NOT allow strong acids such as Hydrochloric, Acetic etc to come into contact with anodised aluminium.
4. Do NOT allow mortar or mortar cleaning chemicals to come into contact with anodised surfaces.
5. Do NOT allow strong alkalis such as caustic soda, lime, etc. to come into contact with anodised aluminium
6. Anodised Aluminium should not be in direct contact with brass or copper.