

# Aluminium Care & Maintenance

As with all materials exposed to the elements, regular maintenance is required to ensure maximum life and performance from the product. It is in the interests of architects, contractors, owners and building managers to avoid long term damage or deterioration. Powder or coil coated or anodised finishes cannot be repaired to their original properties by the in situ treatments.



## It is important to:

Recognise the type of finish to be cleaned and establish a regular cleaning programme to remove dirt, grime, grit, atmospheric pollutants, and iridescence to keep the finish attractive and provide protection.

## Cleaning Procedure

### 1 Primary Cleaning

Is the initial cleaning which should occur after installation / completion to remove atmospheric dust, dirt, deposits, cement and mortar deposits, adhesives, protective tapes etc.

### 2 Secondary Cleaning

Is normally a heavy duty clean on a surface which has not been cleaned for some time. This can be done by companies that specialise in the cleaning of facades, windows, doors, curtain walling etc.

The most important criteria of an aluminium cleaning agent is that it should not be toxic, have a pH between 4.5 and 9, and it must be free of fluorides, chlorides and sulphates.

### Regular Cleaning

Is the cleaning cycle which should be done on the finished aluminium after primary or secondary cleaning and during the service life of the aluminium.

The intervals for each cleaning cycle are dependent on the atmospheric pollutants and local climatic and corrosive conditions.

Regular cleaning should be approximately three months at the coast and six to twelve months inland.

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## Guidelines for the Cleaning of Aluminium

### Do

- 1 Protect exposed surfaces until all 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 mild neutral detergent and rinse thoroughly.
- 4 Remove stubborn deposits on ANODISED aluminium with a suitable nylon abrasive cleaning pad or brush, and neutral detergent and then rinse.
- 5 Remove stubborn deposits on POWDER COATED aluminium with a suitable soft cloth or nylon brush, and neutral detergent, and then rinse.
- 6 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.
- 7 Test any proposed cleaning technique on a small area first.

### Don't

- 1 Don't use wire brushes, steel wool, blades or emery paper. These are NOT recommended under any circumstances.
- 2 Avoid mechanical damage from scaffoldings and bad handling
- 3 Don't allow cleaning with pool acid on anodised finishes, as it contains chlorides.
- 4 Don't allow cleaning with abrasive pads on powder coated surfaces.
- 5 Don't allow mortar cleaning chemicals to come into contact with powder coated or anodised surfaces, unless the cleaning company gives a warranty for its product.
- 6 Aluminium should not be in direct contact with brass or copper, which may be wetted.
- 7 Don't allow strong alkalis such as caustic soda, lime etc. to come into contact with aluminium or finished aluminium.

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