

Maintaining the good looks of your powder coated products is just like caring for your car – and is a smart way to protect your investment. Over time with exposure to the elements, powder coatings may show signs of weathering such as loss of gloss, chalking and slight colour change. A simple regular clean will minimise the effects of weathering and will remove dirt, grime and other build-up detrimental to all powder coatings.

## 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 concrete, 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. Cleaning of powder coated sections can be conveniently carried out at the same time as window cleaning.

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 powder film or the metal substrate (if exposed), cause damage.

The classification of exterior environments is as defined in AS3715 Appendix E. 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 salt 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.

Where the atmosphere is deemed to be non-hazardous, e.g. rural or 'normal' urban environments, then the period between cleaning can be extended up to a maximum of 12 months. However, if heavy soiling occurs more regular cleaning is required.

<b>Non-hazardous Environment</b>	<b>Clean and check every 12 months</b>
<b>Tropical Environment</b>	<b>Clean and check every 9 months</b>
<b>Swimming &amp; Leisure Pools</b>	<b>Clean and check every 6 months</b>
<b>Marine Environment</b>	<b>Clean and check every 3 months</b>
<b>Industrial Environment</b>	<b>Clean and check every 3 months</b>
<b>Hazardous Environment</b>	<b>Clean and check every 1 month</b>

**WARNING.** Do not under any circumstances use strong solvents such as thinners or solutions containing chlorinated hydrocarbons, esters or ketones. Abrasive cleaners or cutting compounds should not be used.

**Interpon** Powder Coatings recommends the use of nothing stronger than white spirits to assist with stubborn stains. Cleaning with white spirits should be carried out in shade and during cooler temperatures using a soft cloth and gentle wiping only. It is also recommended that a small non-visible area be tested initially to ensure that no colour change or damage will occur, particularly with bright and deep colours. Please contact your nearest **Interpon** Powder Coatings sales office for further advice.

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