

Cleaning Recommendations

FOR POWDER COATED SURFACES

A thorough cleaning of surfaces is required

- to conserve the decorative appearance of the surface and
- for the exterior application to reduce corrosion strain

The following minimum requirements apply:

Cleaning-compatible component design

Cleaning-compatible component design has a critical influence on the cleanability of components during their service life. The constructional design and geometry of a component largely determine its likely degree of soiling, as well as the future soiling behaviour caused by e.g. upright surfaces, joints and dirt run-off routes that channel concentrated flows of soiling across visually exposed surfaces. Failings in the constructional design can often not be compensated by a powder-coated surface, not even in conjunction with the right cleaning techniques.

Regular cleaning

If the component is not cleaned during its service life, or is cleaned only irregularly or improperly, this accelerates the soiling process. Depending on the influencing conditions, this in turn may lead to irreparable surface defects (e.g. corrosion, chalking, etc.) and even to a complete loss of decorative appearance. The component may thus only be expected to retain its value and functionality if cleaned regularly and often over the course of its service life, as necessitated by the soiling (i.e. depending on the environmental conditions and the location).

Cleaning of powder coated surfaces

- as the case may be, only clean water, with slight additives of neutral washing agents (pH 7), is to be used with the aid of soft, non-abrasive cloths, rags or industrial cotton. Strong rubbing is not to be undertaken.
- the removal of greasy, oily or sooty substances can take place with the use of isopropyl alcohol (IPA) or white spirit free of aromatic compounds. Residues of adhesives, silicone cartouche or adhesive tapes, etc., can also be removed in this way.
- use no solvents or similar, containing ester, ketones, polyhydric alcohol, aromatics, ethylene glycol or halogenated hydrocarbon.
- joint sealants and other aids such as glazing aids, lubricant agents, drilling and cutting lubricants etc., which come into

contact with coated surfaces must be pH-neutral and free of paint damaging substances. They must first be subjected to a suitability test.

- due to the danger of changes in a color tone or effect, a test for suitability is to be undertaken for metallic coatings.
- use no scratching, abrasive agents.
- use no strong acids or alkaline detergents and introfiers.
- use no detergents of unknown compositions.
- detergents must not be used at temperatures higher than a maximum of 25°C.
- the surface temperature must not exceed 25°C during cleaning.
- the maximum exposure period of these detergents must not exceed one hour: when necessary, the entire cleaning process can be repeated after at least 24 hours.
- rinsing with clean cold water is to take place immediately after every cleaning process.
- Fine-textured effects: Use fibre-free cloths. Moderate mechanical support may be given to the cleaning operation using a soft, non-surface-damaging brush.
- It is a well-known fact that with their ingredients increasing the sun protection factor, cosmetic products, including sunscreens such as suntan lotions, oils and creams in particular, adversely affect powder coatings. Such ingredients diffuse into the coated finish and then lead to impairment of the powder coating finish. Even short-term exposure to their aggressive effect on the finish, sunscreen agents may result in more or less severe spotting on the powder coating finish. Therefore, regular cleaning of the paint layer immediately after exposure to cosmetic product is recommended to protect the paint finish.

Certified facade cleaning

Proper maintenance and regular servicing of the coated surfaces are both prerequisites for the claims of any guarantee and require regular cleaning at least once each year. For severe environmental pollution, for example in regions with increased salt contamination and/or chemical exhausts, meaning in a direct area of influence or within the vicinity of an industrial or chemical enterprise, or in the immediate vicinity of a sea coast or within a defined chemical/radioactive precipitation zone, the building must be cleaned more often. In this way possible damage can be made subject to timely recognition and remedied on time by suitable measures. If a coated component is soiled during transport, through storage or assembly, the cleaning of this component must take place immediately with clear, cold or lukewarm water. Neutral or a weak alkaline detergent can be used against severe soiling.

The prerequisite for proper care of the coated construction is that the construction is regularly cleaned according to the guidelines of the Registered Quality Association for the Cleaning of Metal Facade Elements, and is carried out by a member of the above-named association with detergents and cleaning aids in accord with RAL-GZ 632-1996 and certified by the same association for the certified cleaning of facades with coated surfaces - before every initial cleaning and before every change to another detergent and cleaning-aid during ongoing cleaning intervals, these are to be additionally tested for their suitability on a test area facing south on an unexposed point of at least 2 m².

Further instructions for maintenance and cleaning are available from, among others, the:

- Aluminium-Zentrale Beratungs- und Informationsdienst in D-40003 Düsseldorf (Aluminium Center, Advisory and Information Service)
- Gütegemeinschaft für die Reinigung von Metallfassaden e.V. (GRM) in D-90402 Nürnberg (Registered Quality Association for the Cleaning of Metal Facade Elements)
- American Architectural Manufacturer's Association (AAMA) U.S.A., (AAMA 610-1979 Cleaning Procedures)

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