

Cleaning Guide:

Cleaning and maintaining your anodized aluminum finish.

As with any finished building material, anodized aluminum needs periodic cleaning and maintenance after installation. Although Class 1 anodized aluminum is exceptionally resistant to corrosion, discoloration and wear, its natural beauty can be marred by harsh chemicals, abuse, or neglect. Cleaning may be required more often in one geographic area than another. It is of special significance in areas near a body of salt water.

Such conditions usually affect only the surface finish, but not the integrity of the aluminum. All exterior surfaces collect varying amounts of soil, dust, and dirt, depending on geographic area, environmental conditions, finish and location on the building/home. These factors and the owner's proactive maintenance, determine the type and frequency of cleaning required. The cleaning schedule is vital for maintaining a radiant product and should be initiated as soon as possible after installation is complete.

Cleaning Overview:

An anodized finish should be cleaned using mild soap solutions to retain its original beauty. As a rule of thumb, products that are safe for use with bare hands including most commercial cleaning products can be safely used. The cleaning solution should be applied with a soft cloth, sponge or brush. Before cleaning all of your railing, test the solution in an unseen area to ensure the railing doesn't react. Avoid the use of strong acid or alkali cleaners as these will void the warranty.

Cleaning Methods:

For light soils, the best procedure is to wash down the surface with water using moderate pressure. If soil is still present after air-drying the surface, scrubbing with a brush or sponge and concurrent spraying with water should be tried. If soils still adhere, then a mild detergent cleaner should be used with brushing or sponging. Washing should be done with uniform pressure, first horizontally then vertically. Following the washing, the surfaces must be thoroughly rinsed by spraying with clean water.

It is best to prevent heavy soil accumulation on the anodized aluminum surface. In such instances, removing heavy surface soils may require the use of an abrasive cleaning pad. The pad should be thoroughly soaked with clean water or a mild detergent cleaner and the metal surface hand scrubbed with uniform pressure. Scrubbing action should be in the direction of the metal grain. Scrubbing with a nylon-cleaning pad impregnated with a surface protectant material is also recommended for removing stubborn soils and stains. After scrubbing, the surface should be rinsed thoroughly with clean water to remove all residues.

In some circumstances it may be desirable to wipe the surface with a solvent. The surface should then be permitted to air dry or wiped dry with a chamois, squeegee, or lint-free cloth.

If your railing has unusually heavy soil contamination or more severe damage, give us a call to asses. 954-670-0411.