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### **Manufacturer's Recommendations for Maintaining Aluminum Framing**

Aluminum framing is designed and manufactured to last for many years and periodic maintenance will keep it looking like new.

#### *Dirt and Other surface contaminants*

As with any outdoor article, occasional cleaning is recommended and desirable. A simple solution of detergent (like Tide with less than 0.5% phosphate) can be mixed at one cup per five gallons of warm water is the best way to maintain the like-new appearance. Clean the affected areas with a sponge or soft cloth and rinse immediately. Although the pre-paint will resist most mild cleaners and fresh water, take care not to scratch the painted surfaces.

#### *Chalking*

All paints exposed to direct sunlight will slowly degrade over time, losing gloss and leaving a powdery chalk residue. Rain and weather conditions will typically clean up the loose particles, but if a build up persists, remove using the same methods and materials described above. Be sure to rinse well and protect concrete and other surfaces below the affected area to avoid staining.

#### *Mold & Mildew*

In warm and humid conditions, mold and mildew can grow on the pre-paint surfaces. If left for an extended period, the spores will penetrate the surface coating, causing staining and reducing the product's life. Mold and mildew should be cleaned thoroughly as soon as it is discovered. Mix one cup of mild soap (like Ivory) and one gallon of bleach into five gallons of water. Wash the surface with a sponge or soft cloth or a soft bristle brush for stubborn areas. Rinse with fresh water. Take care to protect your eyes, skin and surrounding areas, including carpets, plants and cloth.

#### *Grease, Oil, Wax, Etc*

Cleaning with mild detergent and water as described above should be tried first. Small areas can be cleaned with commercial kitchen cleaners (be sure to rinse immediately), while larger areas may require a commercial grease remover diluted with fresh water. For persistent stains, a less desirable alternative is to wipe with a solvent like Xylene or Naphtha. Extreme caution should be used in this method, for these can affect the long term durability of the metal by softening or removing the film. Be sure to use plenty of clean cloths to avoid just moving the oily stain around and observe all personal safety and fire warnings of the product.

#### *Things to Avoid!!*

- Cleaning with stiff bristle brushes, wire brushes and abrasive cleaners
- Power washers can be effective on large surfaces, but care should be taken not to undermine the paint. Stop immediately if paint has been scratched or opened to the substrate
- Acid based cleaners, like CLR or high phosphate detergents
- Strong commercial cleaners should be tested in a small area to determine any adverse affects first