

Cleaning Guidelines

Over the past several years we have discovered many things about cleaning wood and existing finishes. First and most importantly is that chlorine bleach is not the best product to use. In addition to its potential for damaging the finish and bare wood fibers, its use and misuse contribute to specific problems including the loss of film adhesion, discolorations due to tannin extraction, streaks, blotches, and premature failures of the finish system. We have also discovered that many wood and deck cleaners available at paint and hardware stores, home improvement centers and Do-It-Yourself outlets contain components that interfere with the proper performance of our finish systems.

Therefore, we have decided that the only cleaning products approved for use with our finishes are those products supplied or recommended by Perma-Chink Systems, Inc. We are not doing this to increase our sales of cleaning products. It is because we have tested our cleaning products with our finish systems and have confidence that when properly used and applied, their use will result in the best possible appearance and performance of the final LIFELINE finish. We can not say the same about the use of other types and brands of wood cleaners, and strongly discourage their use with any of our LIFELINE stains.

Guidelines for Cleaning Bare Wood Prior to Applying LIFELINE™ Stains

New Log Homes

1. If the wood has not grayed, wash the surface using a Log Wash™ solution (2 cups per gallon of clean water) with a pressure washer no more than seven days prior to staining. Smooth log siding should be washed using Wood ReNew™. Rinse well and allow the wood to dry.
2. If you are finishing Western Red Cedar, Redwood, Walnut or Mahogany, use Cedar Wash™, a ready-to-use cleaner, instead of Log Wash™. CedarWash™ gives better surface preparation and finish longevity on these specific wood substrates.
3. If there are signs of grayed wood, use Wood ReNew™ according to the label with a pressure washer. Rinse well and allow wood to dry before staining. If more than seven days pass before the home is ready for staining, wash the surface using a Log Wash™ solution (2 cups per gallon of clean water) with a pressure washer. Rinse well with a garden hose and allow wood to dry.

4. If after steps one or two there are still dark streaks or discolorations on the surface, use a solution of Oxcon™ which contains oxalic acid, on the entire wall according to the directions. Rinse well and allow the wood to dry before staining.

Older Log Homes That Have Had a Previous Finish Removed

1. If there are no signs of gray surface wood, wash the surface using a Log Wash™ solution (2 cups per gallon of clean water) with a pressure washer no more than seven days prior to staining. Rinse well and allow the wood to dry.
2. If you are finishing Western Red Cedar, Redwood, Walnut or Mahogany, use Cedar Wash™, a ready-to-use cleaner, instead of Log Wash for better surface preparation and finish longevity on these specific wood substrates.
3. If there are areas where grayed wood is still evident or if the wood has darkened after the finish was removed, use Wood ReNew™ according to the label with a pressure washer. Rinse well and allow the wood to dry before staining. If the wood has darkened or more than seven days passed before the home is ready for staining, wash the surface using a Log Wash™ solution (2 cups per gallon of clean water). Rinse well with a garden hose and allow the wood to dry.
4. If after steps one or two there are still dark streaks or discolorations on the surface, use Oxcon™, an aqueous oxalic acid solution, on the entire wall according to the directions for use. Rinse well and allow the wood to dry before staining.

Log Homes with an Existing Finish That is Still in Good Condition

If a maintenance coat of LIFELINE stain or topcoat is going to be applied over an existing LIFELINE finish, wash the coating surface using a Log Wash™ solution (2 cups per gallon of clean water) no more than seven days prior to staining. Pressure washing is not recommended. Rinse well and allow the wood to dry. For maintenance-cleaning finished surfaces that are not going to be stained or top-coated, use a Log Wash™ solution (1 cups per gallon of clean water).

A NOTE ABOUT RINSING

No matter what product you use to clean bare wood, nothing is more important than making sure you have adequately rinsed the surface. Any chemical residue remaining on the surface can have serious consequences later on. We always recommend using pH Strips to make sure that the surface of the wood has been sufficiently rinsed. A pH between 6.5 and 7.5 indicates the surface has been properly rinsed. pH Strips are available at most pool supply dealers, aquarium supply shops and Perma-Chink Systems, Inc. They are not expensive, are very easy to use and a great tool to ensure adequate rinsing.