

Technical Tip

Sealing Grayed Wood

Occasionally we get a call from someone whose home has a gray aged patina that appeals to them. They typically want to apply some type of clear water repellent to seal and protect their home, but they don't want to remove the grayed wood. The gray color is an indication that the surface wood has been photo-oxidized by ultraviolet (UV) light and the wood fibers have lost their integrity. The application of any film-forming finish over grayed wood presents a problem since the finish will not adhere to the degraded wood fibers. It would be like trying to paint over a rusted metal surface. Within a few months the paint begins to peel off; consequently, the same thing can happen with a film-forming log home finish applied over grayed wood. With this in mind, we never recommend applying any of our stains or topcoats over gray, photo-oxidized wood.

Although there are solvent-based products that can be applied to grayed wood surfaces they only last about six months or so. If you truly want to protect your home, you will have to remove the grayed wood and if you like the gray look use one of our gray colored stains. If you are not willing to clean the surface down to bare wood, the best recommendation we can give you is to leave the surface alone but make sure that all chink joints, checks and other places that may allow water entry are well sealed.

