

## Cleaning Wood Decks

Wood decks need to be cleaned before they are resealed. Surface debris must be removed to restore the wood to its original look and the cells of the wood must be cleaned out in order for the sealer to penetrate. As mentioned in the first part of this series the "secret" to a long lasting wood deck is to fill the cells of the wood with a synthetic resinous compound that will take the place of the natural resins, cellulose and lignin which break down once the wood is cut from the living tree.

In effect we are trying to create a manmade "petrified wood."

There are countless "old home recipes" for wood cleaners and a wide variety of pre-mixed wood cleaners many of which contain... **Chlorine bleach**

Chlorine kills algae, moss, and mildew. BUT - chlorine breaks down the ligning holding the wood together, causing excessive damage to otherwise healthy wood. Chlorine is very dangerous, environmentally unsound, and likely to cause problems with surrounding greenery. We recommend **Super Cleaner** which will clean and prepare wood for refinishing without the use of dangerous chemicals. **Super Cleaner** contains our environmentally friendly, Cleaner/brightener and kills mildew and algae and is ant-Microbial. **Super Cleaner** also contains special wetting agents which lower the surface tension of water to allow the cleaning solution to wet surfaces and penetrate into, under, and around soils and surface crevices.

**\* Bio-degradable \* Non Ioinic \* Non Toxic \* Non Flammable \* Anti Microbial**

A Gallon of Super Cleaner will clean 800 to 1000 square feet of deck surface. Extremely dirty deck surfaces sometimes need a second quick cleaning.

### The Cleaning Process:

- 1.) Remove any loose soil or dirt.
  - 2.) Wet the deck with water.
  - 3.) Pre-treat oil and grease stains with Shield Degreaser or some other degreaser.
- Apply the deck cleaning solution with a pump-up garden sprayer, paint roller, mop or deck cleaning brush. Wait 15 to 20 minutes after application then scrub with stiff bristle brush on a pole or a push broom. Use a garden hose to rinse away the dirt ,Degreaser and grime. Repeat as necessary, especially for really worn or stained decks.

**Power Washing-** For washing large wood decks and house cleaning prior to painting, power washers make the job fast and easy.

**CAUTION:** The extreme pressure can break up the wood fibers leaving a fuzzy wood finish of broken wood fiber. Not only does this shorten the life of the wood,it also leaves you with poor surface to refinish. Locking down the loose fibers requires more effort and material. There is no need to use one of the giant 3000 psi machines designed to remove multiple layers of paint from cement and stucco, a 500 - 1000 psi machine with a wide fan tip held 2-3' off the surface will do a nice job without destroying everything in its path.

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