



SOMAY PRODUCTS, INC.
4301 NW 35TH AVENUE
MIAMI, FLORIDA 33142-4382, USA
Tel: 305-633-6333 Fax: 305-638-5524
Toll Free: 888-2-4-SOMAY
e-mail: paint@somay.com URL: <http://www.somay.com>

Since 1926 – Manufacturer of Decorative and Protective Paints and Waterproofing Coatings

PROPER SURFACE PREPARATION PRIOR TO PAINTING

In most areas of the world, a coat of paint on the surface of a building will deteriorate and become less attractive looking (for example, the paint film may become “chalky”, “dirty”, or “mildewed”) over a period of time. Or, the paint may lose its adhesion to the surface and peel off from previously coated surfaces that were not properly prepared prior to painting.

The combined effect of sunlight (the ultraviolet rays of the sun in particular), hard driving rain, high velocity winds, airborne chemicals, high humidity, thermal shock from rapid temperature changes, etc., will cause the paint film or coating to gradually deteriorate. A cheap paint containing only the minimum quantity of resin, or a paint that was thinned by the painter prior to application, will start to chalk in about 8 to 10 months; a premium quality (and therefore more expensive) paint containing a much higher percentage of expensive acrylic resins and not thinned by the painter, may last 8 to 10 years or longer before there is evidence of excessive degradation of the paint film. The same phenomenon is noticeable on automobile finishes ... as they age, they gradually lose their gloss, and eventually become hazy and then “chalky” as they deteriorate from exposure to the elements.

A paint film will also become soiled or discolored from traffic driving along the street, from airplanes flying overhead; and from wind carried chemicals, dust, dirt, sand and pollens in the air. Automobiles have to be washed frequently to remove the dirt that lands on the car paint or finish, but we seldom think of washing the exterior of a building to remove the dirt from the paint to make it look cleaner!

In warm, humid areas, both exterior and in bathrooms, laundry rooms and kitchens, a paint film can become the host surface for an infection of living organisms such as mold, mildew, algae, or fungi, or invisible, living and growing spores of these organisms. These living organisms are always in the air and can land on and infect any surface, whether painted or not, and whether inside or outside, except those painted with SOMAY “STERI-SHIELD”[®] Fungistatic Paint.

NO PAINT will stick (adhere) to any “chalky”, “powdery”, “dusty”, “dirty” or mildew-infected surface for very long. The chalk, powder, dust, or dirt acts much like bath powder or talcum powder - after a bath it prevents your clothes from sticking to you, or a diaper from sticking to a baby’s bottom! On a surface to be painted, it prevents the paint film from adhering properly to the surface. Therefore, it is a waste of time, labor, effort, paint, and money to put any paint or coating on any surface unless the surface is completely and properly cleaned immediately prior to painting, and then protected so that it will not become re-contaminated before the paint film is applied.

To determine if a surface is properly cleaned and prepared prior to being painted, you can use this simple test ... when the surface is dry, rub (with some pressure) the open palm of your hand over the surface. If any chalk, powder, dust or dirt comes off on your hand, you still have more preparation work to do before you start to apply the first coat of paint. If you apply paint to an improperly prepared surface and the paint comes off, don't blame the paint!

The surface MUST be completely disinfected of **ALL** molds, mildew, fungus and all invisible spores of growing organisms prior to painting. These growing organisms can exist on any surface, whether inside or outside, and MUST be killed using a chlorine solution, such as "Clorox", which is approximately a 5% solution of Sodium Hypochlorite in water. Swimming pool chlorine can be diluted one to one (1:1) with water to make a 5% solution. If one does not use chlorine to kill ALL mold, mildew, fungus and spores of these organisms on the surface before one starts to paint, they will continue to grow underneath a newly applied coat of paint, causing the new paint film to eventually lose adhesion to the surface. Don't blame the paint!

The most satisfactory way to thoroughly clean a very hard surface such as concrete or stucco prior to painting is with the use of a very high-pressure (minimum of 2,200 P.S.I. at the tip; and 3,200 P.S.I. at the tip is preferable) water blasting or pressure cleaning system. In very extreme cases, grit blasting may be necessary. However, do NOT use high-pressure water on any infirm surface, such as asphalt shingles, etc., when you do not wish to completely strip off everything that is not firm and very solid.

If, after pressure cleaning, you still have a slight amount of chalk, powder or dust rub off on the palm of your hand when you rub your palm across the surface, then a special bonding primer/sealer, such as Somay Product No. 530, "Surface Conditioner", MUST be applied as the first (primer) coat prior to the application of the second (top) coat of the finish paint. For asphalt shingles, the proper primer is SOMAY Product No. 7751, "PRIME & SEAL.

Another common paint adhesion problem results from painting over a hard, glossy enamel surface without proper surface preparation. Surfaces such as doors, windows, and trim are frequently painted with semi-gloss or high-gloss enamels. These glossy enamels are used because they produce a harder, smoother finish, which prevents dirt from sticking to the surface so readily, and makes the surface easier to clean. However, for the same reason, a coat of paint won't stick very well to these surfaces either. Therefore, all hard, glossy enamel surfaces MUST be sanded thoroughly with sandpaper to roughen and completely dull the old surface prior to repainting. The only possible substitute for sanding hard, glossy enamel surfaces is to use a chemical "liquid sandpaper" immediately prior to painting, being sure to follow the product label instructions.

PLEASE - always read completely the detailed instructions on the paint can label prior to painting, and please follow the instructions in every detail. These instructions are based on our many years of experience formulating, manufacturing and distributing some of the finest, highest quality, most durable paints available on the market today. Please don't waste your time, energy, money or our fine paint and coating products by ignoring the label instructions.

In summary, there is absolutely NO substitute for, and NO short cut to, proper surface preparation. And without proper surface preparation, there is NO chance of a completely satisfactory, long-lasting paint job. As we say on our SOMAY paint can labels, ***"The secret of a successful paint job is proper surface preparation."***

SP-100-1995