



## Protecting Your Aluminum Finish During Building Construction

The ability of aluminum to resist weathering in many environments while maintaining structural integrity has been proven over many years. High-performance paint and anodize finishes add durable aesthetic qualities and provide color flexibility to meet the architect's design requirements.

[Anodized finishes](#) provide outstanding surface properties, including excellent resistance to abrasion, erosion, and ultraviolet light degradation. These finishes are highly durable, have an exceptionally long life expectancy, and require only minimum maintenance.

[Kynar<sup>®</sup> paint coatings](#) offer an endless selection of colors, maximizing design freedom. Together with a proper pretreatment, Kynar<sup>®</sup> coatings offer a long lasting finish with durability, flexibility, and excellent color control.

### **To assure a long lasting paint or anodize finish be sure the following items are considered during storage and installation:**

- Upon receipt, shipments should be sufficiently inspected to ensure your material is in good condition and is in accordance with the purchase order.
- Transfer material directly from truck to storage area to reduce handling and exposure. If future contact with water is possible, outer wrappings or interleaving paper, cardboard, or other such materials should be removed. Prolonged contact with wet materials can cause staining or discoloration of the aluminum.
- Aluminum stored outdoors in an open building should be covered with a clean tarp, especially for parts with temporary protective coverings. Tapes and strippable coatings become difficult to remove after extended exposure to the heat or sunlight.
- Materials must not be stored or left in a condition where mortar, lime, acids, chemicals, or other corrosive dust materials can splatter or come in contact with the aluminum in any way. Should this occur the corrosives must be removed as quickly as possible in a method that will not damage the finish.
- Architectural designs often incorporate many different materials, making possible contact between dissimilar materials an important consideration. If questions occur regarding compatibility, the manufacturer of the aluminum products should be contacted.
- The major source of damage to in-place aluminum components usually comes from the splashing, splattering, or run-down from adjacent or overhead masonry work. Acids used for cleaning operations also pose a serious problem. Any mortar, plaster, concrete, fire proofings, sprays, paints, or other wet preparations that inadvertently splash upon the aluminum must be immediately wiped clean before they dry and the area washed liberally with water. Dried splatterings should be removed with wooden or plastic scrapers (not metal) which will not scratch the surface.

- Chemical attack occurs when acid or alkaline materials come in contact with aluminum finishes, especially an anodized finish. The most common occurrences are when mortar or muriatic acid is allowed to dwell, even for a short time, on a window or aluminum building component. Once the finish is visually affected, irreversible damage has occurred and the discolored item may need to be replaced.
- If strong cleaners are used to clean brick work and masonry, they should be confined to the area being cleaned. Cleaners strong enough to dissolve mortar spots on brick will surely damage any aluminum finish and possibly the underlying metal. Accidental contact from these solutions should be flushed from the aluminum surface immediately with clean water.
- Welding fluxes can cause damage to aluminum during installation, and should be immediately flushed from the surface with water if accidental contact is made. Care should also be taken to ensure heat generated during welding does not affect the finish. High temperature to anodize and painted coatings can permanently damage or discolor the finish.
- When tar roofing is applied, the roofing should be graveled on the same day to minimize staining from run-down. Failure to avoid contact with the aluminum will result in staining that is extremely difficult to remove.

It is crucial that aluminum work be carefully protected after the installation is complete and prior to the buildings final acceptance. This protection is usually the general contractor's responsibility.

Most damage to aluminum work will occur during this time. Installed aluminum work is considered a "finished product" while the other building components are generally in a rough or unfinished state. Aluminum materials, therefore, must be well protected and shielded since it is often impossible to satisfactorily repair damaged materials in the field. Even if possible, rework is costly and can lack the quality of the original work. Likewise, replacement is time consuming and expensive.