



Maintenance Guidelines



Cleaning instructions

General

Anodised aluminium used in architecture requires very little maintenance. The anodising layer consists of metal, aluminium oxide and is hard and robust. Maintenance is therefore understood to mean: cleaning of the product. A clean anodised aluminium surface has a very long lifespan. Under normal conditions, it can easily last 80 years, without losing its gloss or colour (e.g. the electrolytically dyed layers).

Cleaning products

Only products that do not damage the anodised surface should be used for cleaning. These are 'pH neutral', synthetic cleaning products. These synthetic cleaning products are strongly diluted in water when used for regular maintenance. Warm water can be used if necessary. A number of cleaning products can be ordered from Alumet, www.alumet.nl.

F-1 Metal Polish Stripper preserves and cleans stainless steel and anodising layers. This product is acid-free and alkali-free and has a combined cleaning and preserving effect on metal surfaces, anodised aluminium and stainless steel. F-1 is GRM-listed. <http://www.afalin.de/produkte/produktuebersicht/spezialprodukte/finol-metall-polishreinigerf-1-fassadenpolish/>

F-2 Metal Stripper is an intensive cleaner for extremely dirty anodised aluminium or stainless steel façades. Alkalifree and acid-free. <http://www.afalin.de/produkte/produktuebersicht/spezialprodukte/finol-metall-grundreiniger-f-2-fassadenreiniger/> For information about tested cleaning products, please refer to the website of Gütegemeinschaft Reinigung von Fassaden (www.grm-online.de). We must emphasise the warning that alkaline cleaning products, such as soda-containing products and strong detergents, must not be used. Acids such as hydrochloric acid (often used for the cleaning of stone-work façades) and phosphoric acid-containing products should not be used either, as this causes the anodising layer to disappear. Aluminium, including aluminium oxide, is 'dissolved' at low pH (acid) or high pH (salt/alkali). Abrasive or scouring materials - such as steel wool, steel wire brushes, sandpaper and hard polishing agents - will also damage the anodising layer.



Cleaning instructions

Universal cleaning frequency

The cleaning of anodised aluminium in buildings and other structures must be performed according to a set schedule. This schedule is dependent on the atmosphere to which the aluminium is exposed or the extent of natural cleaning (rainfall). The following can be used as a guideline: Under normal circumstances and with natural cleaning through rainfall, it is enough to clean the aluminium once a year with a cloth or brush and plenty of water. A neutral synthetic detergent can be used if necessary and then left to dry. However, cleaning should be performed twice a year in the case of an industrial environment or in the absence of natural cleaning through rainfall.

Building-specific cleaning procedure

The frequency of cleaning, the order of cleaning and the detergents to be used depend on how dirty the aluminium is. This needs to be assessed per site, per building and sometimes per façade. For an exact description, please refer to the Gütegemeinschaft Reinigung von Fassaden (www.grm-online.de), publications: 'information sheets', 'quality specifications' and 'Reinigungsmittel (cleaning detergents)'. We distinguish between initial cleaning, interval cleaning, basic cleaning and preservative (pre-emptive) cleaning. This site also publishes the relevant tested detergents and certified cleaning companies.