



Version August 2020

Recommended Cleaning Procedures for Coated Steel Sheeting

To derive the maximum service life from Coated Steel sheeting, it is important that the sheeting is regularly cleaned and washed down, and is kept as free as possible of debris, accumulated dirt, mould or mildew build-up, and washed down to remove airborne contaminants.

- Debris and accumulated dirt which are not removed by normal rain should be removed by establishing a schedule of regular maintenance and cleaning.
- Some environments e.g. areas close to excavations and areas where continuous construction activity is taking place, may require more frequent cleaning to avoid damage to the sheeting.
- Regular cleaning of metal roofing and side cladding becomes all the more important in areas that are susceptible to the build-up of mould and mildew.

These tips will help you approach the cleaning of your metal roof properly, and help you avoid inadvertently causing damage.

Recommended Cleaning Procedures for Coated Steel Sheeting

Recommended Procedures :

1. Cleaning Procedures during Construction

During construction, clean sheeting daily to remove any swarf, fasteners, offcuts and other debris (also check in the eaves, troughs, valleys etc.) so as to minimise the risk of localised corrosion.

Care should be taken not to allow mortar or similar cementitious substances to dry on newly fastened sheeting. Immediately wipe off with a soft cloth and rinse with water, avoiding the build-up of residue or dirty water on the sheeting.

Cleaning of adhesive contamination:

- Water Based Adhesive substance: Follow the Dirt and Debris Procedure in point 2.
- Paraffin Based Adhesive substance: It may be cleaned by wiping off with a soft cloth dampened with paraffin.

Care should be taken to avoid the accumulation of "metal chip" or swarf particles generated due to drilling or cutting of sheets. The particles should be removed immediately (or at least daily) since they will rust over time.

2. Cleaning Procedures for ongoing Sheeting Maintenance

It is recommended that coated steel sheeting is cleaned every 6 months. In addition:

2.1 Removing Dirt and Debris

Fresh water should be applied by hosing down the sheeting using a soft brush, broom, cloth or sponge. Stubborn marks can be removed by applying some pressure, ensuring the coating is not damaged. Should it be required, a mild detergent solution can be used to ensure a more intense wash. The concentration of the detergent should be kept at its minimum.

- The washing process should occur in a downward direction. The dirty water and cleaning solution should be rinsed off with copious amounts of clean and fresh water to remove all dirty water and soapy substances from the surface.
- The surface should then be allowed to dry.

2.2 Removing Mould and Mildew

It is recommended that a low toxic solution such as 3% Hydrogen Peroxide (H₂O₂) be used. To use this odourless liquid, pour it into a spray bottle and thoroughly spritz the affected areas. During the operation it is recommended to use protective eyewear.

- Take a soft brush and lightly scrub the area affected by mould and mildew, ensure the coating is not damaged. Repeat this process until the area is free of mould and mildew.
- Rinse the area thoroughly with clean water.
- Inspect the roof after drying and repeat the above steps if required, ensuring the coating is not damaged.

3. What to Avoid?

- Hard bristle brooms or abrasive tools.
- Heavy duty cleaners with high alkaline or acidic content.
- High pressure jet cleaning.
- Any solvents.
- Mixing cleaners or detergents with bleach.
- The use of detergents containing more than 0.5% Phosphates.

Should you require technical advice on the cleaning procedure, please call Safal Steel on telephone 031 782 5500.