

Maintenance

Aluminum has a natural beauty and luster. Its surface can be treated in various ways to produce different effects. While in the hands of the skilled architect it lends itself to some excellent variations, and contrasts with other materials. For this reason and because aluminum is so well-proven in service, it is now by far the most common material for exterior work such as windows, doors, curtain walls and shop fronts.

The surface finish of aluminum can be spoiled by improper care and the purpose of this note is to summarize the methods of maintaining aluminum after proper installation on site. Knotwood substantially enhances appearance and renders the surface more resistant to various forms of attack while also facilitating easier cleaning and maintenance.

Grime which causes deterioration cannot be prevented from settling on exposed surfaces. If cleaned regularly then the mildest methods of washing will produce satisfactory results.

There are many ways to clean aluminum, from using plain water to harsh abrasives. The type of cleaning that should be used is governed by the finish, degree of soiling, and the size, shape and location of the surface to be cleaned. Regular cleaning of the surface with the correct materials will ensure an everlasting product.

For Knotwood, the mildest method possible should be used. The following cleaning materials and procedures are listed in ascending order of harshness. The mildest treatment should be tried on a small area and if not satisfactory only then should the next item be examined.

- *Plain water*
- *Mild soap or detergent*
- *Solvent cleaning, e.g. kerosene, turpentine, white spirit*
- *Non-etching chemical cleaner*
- *Wax base polish cleaner*
- *Abrasive wax*
- *Abrasive cleaner*

After applying the cleaner, aluminum should be washed down thoroughly and dried with a clean cloth to prevent streaking. There should be no concentration of the cleaner at the bottom edges of the aluminum. If using proprietary cleaners, the maker's recommendation should be obtained and followed carefully.

If abrasives are used, then the appearance of the aluminum finish may be altered. If there is a grain in the finish then cleaning should always be with the grain.

Once the condition of the surface requires the use of abrasive or etching materials it is advisable to consult cleaning specialists or Knotwood's Technical Service Department.