



## Removing Dried Finishes, Sealants, Borates, and Cleaners from Surfaces

Our stains and sealants are all water-based and while they are still wet most clean up easily with soap and water. That sounds so simple but, most of the time, it's the best method to use for cleaning our wet, uncured products off windows, gutters, downspouts and other smooth surfaces. However, there are occasions when other clean-up techniques should be used to remove some of our textured sealants from wood surfaces. Soap and water won't remove dried or cured products, so it's good to know how to remove them. Remember to always try a small spot before using any type of cleaner over a large area. You never know if it will discolor a surface without checking it first. Let's now take a closer look at some specific products and situations.

### All Interior and Exterior stains and Advance Topcoats

If you are working on small areas at a time, it's not difficult to carry a damp rag with you and wipe off any product that gets onto surfaces that you don't want stained or top-coated. But if you are using an airless sprayer and overspray gets onto surfaces like windows, gutters or doorknobs, there is a good chance that the product will dry before you get a chance to wipe it off. If the stain or topcoat has been on for less than an hour, isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol may remove it but if it has had enough time to start curing it will probably require something stronger. The most effective group of products we've found for removing dried finishes are automotive glass cleaners available at most automotive supply stores. There are several brands of aerosol foam cleaners that work but be sure that removing bugs, grime and tar is on the label. If it is, it will probably do a good job. You need a foam type product to assure that it does not quickly run off the surface. If you are attempting to remove the stain or topcoat off a painted surface be sure to test a small spot to make sure that it does not discolor or remove the paint as well.



*Examples of some products that can be used to clean interior and exterior finishes and Advance off windows and other smooth surfaces. Note: None of these products are endorsed by Perma-Chink Systems, Inc.*



## **Energy Seal®**, **Woodsman™** and **Perma-Chink®**

These sealants contain an aggregate that gives them their texture. If you get them on a smooth, slick surface they can be easily removed with a damp rag. But if you get a clump on a rough surface like bare or stained wood, the aggregate and polymer will get imbedded in minute nooks and crannies on the surface, and it becomes very difficult to completely wipe it off without smearing it over a wide area. If the wood is bare, once stained the spot may stick out from the surrounding area since the sealant residue will change the porosity of the wood. It is sometimes better to allow the **Perma-Chink**, **Energy Seal** or **Woodsman** time to partially cure and then try to roll it off with your thumb and fingers.

Once these sealants are fully cured, they become very difficult to remove from just about any surface. The best way to remove them from hard smooth surfaces is to scrape or cut them off with a razor knife. If they cure on bare or stained wood, they are almost impossible to remove without doing some damage to the surface and the finish. Cured **Perma-Chink**, **Energy Seal**, and **Woodsman** are impervious to most solvents, but if you want to soften them for easier removal you can use a paint stripper containing methylene chloride. You'll need to put on a thick coat and since it needs to be left on the sealant for at least four to six hours, it's best to cover it with plastic film to keep it from drying out. When the sealant softens, you can try removing it with a scraper or stiff nylon bristled brush. Do not use a wire brush. No matter which method you've used to remove **Perma-Chink**, **Energy Seal**, or **Woodsman**, if the surface was stained, you'll need to do some touch-up work. Sand the spots with 60 or 80 grit sandpaper then touch-up using a rag rather than a brush.

## **Check Mate 2®**

Since this smooth surfaced sealant contains no aggregate, it is much easier to remove with a wet rag if it is done quickly. However, once it cures, you'll need to use the same techniques as removing cured **Perma-Chink**, **Energy Seal** or **Woodsman**.

## **Log End Seal™**

Wet Log End Seal™ is easy to remove using just water, but once it cures it becomes just about impossible to remove without physically grinding or sanding it off. The problem is that since it is a soft polymer it will quickly fill sandpaper or a sanding disk. Probably the best tool to use is a Wood Shark. If the teeth of the Wood Shark do become filled with polymer, it can be burned away with a blow torch and the Wood Shark can be reused indefinitely.



### **Borates, Wood ReNew™, and Log Wash™**

Borates (**Bora-Care**, **PenaShield**, and **Tim-Bor**), **Wood ReNew** and **Log Wash** are all water soluble but if not adequately rinsed from glass or painted surfaces, they can leave a white haze. The best thing to use to remove any borate, **Wood ReNew** or **Log Wash** residue is pure warm water. Don't add any ammonia, soap or detergent. Once the residue is washed off you can use a commercial glass cleaner to remove any streaks.

### **M-Balm™ and E-Wood™**

These products are two component epoxies that are not water soluble, so soap and water won't have much effect on them. You can use white vinegar to clean up the individual components or even mixed material before it cures. To remove cured **M-Balm** and **E-Wood** you have no choice but to grind or sand it off. That's not difficult with **E-Wood** putty but since **M-Balm** soaks into the wood surface sanding will still leave the wood impregnated with epoxy and prevent that area from properly taking a stain.