

Tech Note 29: Cleaning & Maintaining Stainless

TN.29

Related Documents:

- Tech Note TN.01 Chlorides & Stainless Steel

The secret to stainless steel's ability to maintain a high-quality finish and promises of a long-life expectancy is the invisible chromium-oxide film that protects the steel beneath.

To maintain this film, it is essential that the surface remains clean and in constant contact with oxygen. If this film is penetrated (from either abrasion or chemically) by dirt, liquid or grime contaminants embed themselves for an extended period, the chromium-oxide film is not regenerated, and the steel below will eventually become damaged and discoloured.

Stainless steel products should be kept clean at all times.

It is recommended that general cleaning of stainless steel surfaces be carried out regularly, or as soon as build-up of surface media has been observed.

To clean, simply wash stainless steel surfaces with warm, diluted, mild soapy water using a cloth or soft bristled brush. Once all dirt, oil and grime is removed, rinse thoroughly with clean potable water and wipe dry.

Suitable Methods	
Cleaning Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Soft cloth, or - Soft-bristled brush, or - Natural or artificial sponge. 	Cleaning Solutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hand washing soap - soft warm water solution, - Mild soap - soft warm water solution, - White vinegar - soft warm water solution.
Note: Remove all of the above solutions with clean potable water wash after application!	

Methods to Avoid
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do NOT use a metal brush or steel wool to clean stainless steel. Ever. These tools will scratch the surface as well as potentially leave behind steel fragments that can go rusty and cause the stainless to discolour. - Do NOT use scourers of any kind that have previously been used on ordinary steel. Microscopic steel fibres transferred onto the stainless steel can cause considerable damage to the surface and will void any product warranty. - Do NOT use abrasive cleaning brushes, pads or agents on highly polished finishes. - Do NOT use harsh cleaners that contain powerful acidic or alkaline chemicals such as hydrochloric acid and sodium hydroxide that will damage the surface. Any water coming into contact with stainless steel, particularly cleaning solutions, should have zero chloride content as even minute amounts can cause damage. Using these cleaners will void any product warranty. - Do NOT use chlorinated sanitisers, cleansers or bleach of any kind. Despite some cleaners displaying the text, 'Suitable for Toilets and Urinals' this is more likely in reference to ceramic/vitreous China products. Use of these cleaners can damage stainless steel and will void any product warranty. - Do NOT use brick cleaning liquids that contain hydrochloric acid anywhere near stainless. If cement needs to be removed from stainless (before it sets), a mixture of hot water and 25% vinegar or 10% phosphoric acid can be effective. Once cleaned, the surface should then be neutralised with dilute ammonia or sodium bicarbonate then rinsed with fresh water and dried.

For more information, please contact AusPress Systems 1300 287 773 or technical@auspress.com.au for clarification.