



SOLUTIONS

PRESSURE TREATED WOOD. PAINT, STAIN OR SEAL?

Pressure treated lumber is a wonderful product for use in Florida. If the wood is to come into contact with concrete slabs, the ground, or other wet exposures, pressure treated lumber is the only wood that has a chance of lasting for very long. Pressure treated lumber is manufactured using a high pressure process to deeply impregnate biocidal and fungicidal chemicals all the way through into the core of the wood. Unfortunately, this very process that is so beneficial to the life of the wood leaves a surface that is extremely difficult to paint, stain, or seal effectively. This Solutions sheet will give you some guidelines to successfully paint pressure treated lumber. Bear in mind however, that even the best paint job on pressure treated lumber will not succeed 100%. Due to the high moisture content provided by the chemicals impregnated in the wood, as well as sap laden knots, there will be some moisture induced peeling on any pressure treated lumber paint job. The beauty of paint is that these peeled areas can be touched up occasionally without having to completely strip and repaint the surface. If you understand from the outset that you will be touching up a small percentage of your pressure treated lumber paint job every year, you can be happy and satisfied with a job that will last many, many years following the instructions below.

1. Allow pressure treated lumber to age at least 90 days or preferably six months before painting. This allows excessive protective chemicals to ooze out of the surface, lowering the moisture level to improve paint adhesion.
2. If the new pressure treated lumber shows any signs of mold, mildew, or algae growth, pressure clean the surface just as you would prepping for any paint job, using a dilute solution of chlorine and water. Surprisingly, mildew grows quite well on unprotected, pressure treated lumber, and it must be removed before painting.
3. We at Scott Paint recommend painting pressure treated lumber with an appropriate primer and topcoat system. The recommended system for best durability is to prime with one coat of Scott Ultra 100% Acrylic Supercoat Primer White #400 and then topcoating with Scott Ultra 100% Acrylic Flat Supercoat #410 or Velvet Supercoat #420. The use of vinyl acrylic, acrylic blends, or low quality, non-100% acrylic primers and paints is specifically not recommended. We do not recommend clear waterproof sealers on pressure treated lumber, as the nature of the lumber eliminates the ability of these sealers to penetrate properly. Sitting on the surface, these sealers can actually attract dirt, mold, mildew and algae, causing more damage than if left unpainted. Staining pressure treated lumber is also not recommended, again due to the inability of stains to properly penetrate into the lumber. It is our experience that a proper primer and topcoat of 100% acrylic premium paints has the best chance of adhering and withstanding the excessive moisture and shrinkage of pressure treated lumber.

On docks, decks, and other horizontal surfaces that are walked on, leaving the surface unfinished is recommended, but for aesthetic or safety reasons, if you wish to paint them, again use a top quality 100% acrylic system such as the Scott Ultra 100% Acrylic Primer #400 topcoated with Scott Skid-X Anti-Slip Paint #480 or Scott Floor-Tred Floor and Deck Paint #460. Keep any excess paint from the completed job in a secure place to allow the same product and color to be used for the inevitable touch-ups that will occur.

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