



SOLUTIONS

PREVENTING MILDEW AND ALGAE

Mildew and algae are airborne living organisms that can blemish the appearance of almost any building material, especially paint. Mildew and algae growth is sporadic and inconsistent. Out of ten homes prepared and painted the same way with the same paints, nine may look beautiful for many years while one may develop mildew or algae contamination, or both. To give you the best chance of avoiding mildew and algae contamination, we want you to understand what it is and what preparation is needed to resist its growth. Mildew is a fungus, whereas algae is a plant. Mildew is identifiable as a blackish gray stain that appears like dirt, but doesn't come off with detergent. Algae typically is green, dark blue, red, or orange, which also does not remove with detergent. Both mildew and algae need 3 things to grow: warmth, moisture, and nutrients (food). Florida is known for its heat and moisture. This is why Florida is known as a mildew prone state. As a nutrient, mildew can feed off of anything, including unprotected paint. Even new lumber from the mill may have gotten wet while stored and can be an excellent source of mildew nutrients, as the cellulose that makes up the wood fiber is very digestible to the spores. To avoid the conditions that aid mildew and algae growth, do the following:

1. Test dirt stains for mildew or algae by dabbing on some undiluted swimming pool chlorine (sodium hypochlorite) without scrubbing. If the stain disappears within 2 to 3 minutes, it is algae or mildew, not dirt.
2. Always prepare the surface for painting by pressure cleaning the surface with a solution of water and 15% chlorine. If pressure washing is not practical, the use of a Hudson sprayer and a scrub brush using the same 15% solution of chlorine and water will do the trick. After treating with the chlorine solution, pressure wash again with clean water or low pressure, rinse and then let dry. If signs of mildew or algae remain after the first cleaning, repeat until the surface is clean.
3. Even wood that is new should be treated with the solution of water and chlorine to kill any latent mildew spores.
4. As mildew can occur on home interiors, use the same chlorine and water solution to remove interior staining and then let dry before painting. In homes where air conditioning is not regularly used, high humidity levels combined with poor air circulation provide conditions that are ideal for the growth of mildew. If leaving a home for the summer, leave the air conditioning system on, set at 80° so that it occasionally comes on to reduce humidity and improve circulation.
5. After the surface is completely clean and free of algae or mildew, use Scott Ultra 100% Acrylic Supercoat. You cannot buy or specify a better paint for beating mildew than Ultra.

Even under the best conditions and after using Scott Paint, it is a good idea to occasionally wash your building down with a light chlorine solution every second or third year. Keeping the building free of dirt, insect contamination, and salt residues can add years to the life of the paint film while maintaining an attractive appearance. See the Scott solution sheet "Extending Paint Life" for further information.

SCOTT PAINT COMPANY • Florida's Best Paint...Since 1965

Corporate Office and Manufacturing Facility

7839 Fruitville Road • Sarasota, Florida 34240 • (941) 371-0015 • Fax: (941) 378-0010 • www.scottpaint.com