

## FACT SHEET

### **ALUMINIUM WINDOW FRAMES OR CLADDING? – PAINT TO PROTECT IT!**

Aluminium is a common metal with various uses not in the least in the home as a material for window frames, screen doors and exterior cladding. However, unless it was anodised during manufacture, chances are that the weather has caused it to look the worse for wear, says the APMF.

The unprotected metal is prone to the effects of the weather such as oxidation and over the years this causes a dull pitted surface to appear. Even in the case of pre-coated aluminium there may be a breakdown of the coating over time. This can show itself in a subtle way such as flaking, discolouration, or the formation of a chalky residue noticeable when wiped with the palm of your hand. Advanced deterioration is indicated by cracking and/or peeling of the coloured surface.

One other aspect with cladding is that you may become bored with the same colour and simply want a change. Whatever the reason, a fresh coat of paint will rectify the situation and provide a protective durable coating and look good for years to come.

Here's how:

#### **Preparation and Painting**

When working on unpainted aluminium, it is necessary to prepare a suitable surface for the paint to adhere to. Using wet and dry sandpaper thoroughly clean the surface. Then wipe clean and dry with a

cloth or solvent. When clean and dry, apply a coat of specific aluminium primer or etch primer, as soon as possible. Allow to dry and follow with a surface coating suitable for aluminium surfaces. If in doubt, seek advice from your retailer and always follow the manufacturer's directions located on the can.

In the case of previously painted aluminium, where the paint has cracked or peeled you should remove it thoroughly with either a non-metallic nylon scourer or abrasive paper, depending on the degree of deterioration. On any bare areas, prime the surface as before and finish with a suitable surface coating. Often the best results will be achieved if a second coat is also applied. On previously coated aluminium, in a sound condition, use an abrasive paper to provide a key for the new paint, dust off and apply an undercoat. Follow with a top coat.

Bear in mind also that you should avoid painting exterior surfaces in direct sunlight or if rain or dew is likely, as this may cause the paint to dry too quickly and form blisters. Choose a mild to warm day and, if necessary, follow the shade around. Similarly, avoid painting in the cool evenings as dew may form on the surface and disrupt your project.

Bring a fresh look to your home's exterior – with paint.