

Important Considerations

- Ensure minimum 15 cm of required ventilation under deck substructure and required spacing between decking boards.
- Improve drainage or grade soil to eliminate standing water under decks.
- Direct downspouts, downspout extensions and splash guards away from decks.
- Position dryer vents away from decks.
- Maintain a deck that is dry and clean.
- Clean your deck as often as needed, at least twice each year.
- Use extreme caution with pressure washers and use at pressures less than 103 bar at 30 cm above deck surface. Pressure washing is not recommended when mould/mildew are present on the deck.
- Keep debris out of gaps between the decking boards so rain showers can remove pollen and organic debris between cleanings.
- Minimise the use of wet mulch up against the deck structure.
- Items stored directly on top of the deck surface, such as flower pots, prohibit water evaporation and can cause some staining of the deck surface.
- Use of wrought iron railing or other carbon steel materials in contact with or above an uncapped composite deck surface may cause dark extractive staining.

Ventilation

Do not install decking directly onto a solid surface. Make sure there is adequate and unobstructed air flow under the deck to prevent excessive water absorption. Improve drainage or grade flat areas where standing water may gather. Allow a minimum of 15 cm between the bottom of the deck substructure/joists and the ground. The deck design must allow unrestricted airflow under at least 50% of its perimeter to permit adequate ventilation.

Mind the Gap

If the gap between decking boards is less than 5 mm, organic debris such as leaves, seeds or pollen can settle on the deck and clog gaps. Water can pool, steeping organic debris that forms a "tea" of tannin which may stain your deck. This organic debris is a strong food source for mould. Keeping the gap clean is the easiest way to keep the deck clean. If gapping becomes clogged, use a garden hose, a spatula, putty knife or similar tool to remove debris.

Clean Your Deck

Clean your deck as often as needed, at least twice each year to remove pollen, organic debris, dirt or stains. Generally, a broom or a blower will work better than a hose for removing scattered organic materials like leaves. For general cleaning, use soap and water or mild household cleaners.

Dirt and Grime

Dislodge accumulated dirt with a broom or by using soap and water and a non-metal scrub brush. Scrubbing in the direction of the grain is best. Thoroughly rinse off with a garden hose. Skilled professionals may use a pressure washer with wide fan tips, at low pressures under 103 bar and at safe distances, 30 cm above the deck. In the wrong hands, your composite deck can be damaged. Exercise extreme caution.

Oil and Grease Stains

Speedy clean-up is best. To clean grease and oil stains that soap and water cannot remove, some all-purpose cleaners will cut through grease and grime. Or use a commercial deck cleaner designed specifically for your type of decking that is effective in removing tar, asphalt, oil, grease and chewing gum. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's recommendations and test in an inconspicuous area prior to cleaning the entire deck.

Important Ladder Usage Safety Instructions

When using a ladder, place the ladder on a piece of 19 mm plywood firmly secured to the deck surface to disperse the load of the ladder's feet to nearby underlying joists. Drill fasteners downward through the top of the plywood sheet, into the deck board gaps and into the joists to keep the plywood from slipping. This avoids leaving holes in your decking once the plywood sheet is removed. Be sure to follow the ladder manufacturer's instructions and safety tips.

Mould and Mildew

Mould and mildew are common environmental conditions. Moulds grow on decaying organic material such as wood, leaf decay and pollen. Tiny and lightweight, mould spores travel easily through the air. Different climates experience varying degrees of these conditions depending on the amount of moisture and heat present.

To thrive, mould and mildew need air, water, elevated temperatures and a food source. There is no way to eliminate all these conditions in the environment. A wide variety of building materials including concrete, wood products, vinyl cladding and many others are subject to potential mould growth.

To minimise mould on your decking, clean your deck as often as needed, at least twice each year. Climate conditions vary in different regions of the country and may necessitate more periodic cleaning. Removal of leaves, debris, and other organic materials that provide a food source for mould development is important. If mould is present on your deck, there are many commercial products available for cleaning mould. We recommend the following commercial cleaners. For best results, be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions and use cleaners within their stated shelf life. Do not mix recommended cleaning products together as harmful chemical reactions could occur. Never mix bleach and acids.

Heavy duty, mildly alkaline chlorinated mould and mildew removers/cleaners that are biodegradable will perform very well in removing mould and mildew and retarding its return.

For more information on cleaning mould and mildew, see Fiberon Technical Bulletin no. 13 at this link, <http://www.fiberondecking.com/design/literatureCenter>.

Tannin Stains

Tannins naturally occur in all wood species and sometimes migrate to the surface where wood fibres are exposed to sun and water. Tannin stains tend to disappear naturally after removal of standing water under mats, flower pots or umbrella stands where water is trapped for longer periods of time. To hasten removal of tannin stains, use a commercial deck cleaner designed specifically for your type of decking, strictly following the manufacturer's instructions. One effective treatment is a mixture of one cup (250 ml) of trisodium phosphate, one cup (250 ml) of bleach and 3.8 litres of warm water, applied with a long-handled deck brush. To help protect landscaping, we recommend wetting down landscaping prior to treatment.

Salt and Calcium Chloride

Build-up of salt and calcium chloride from snow and ice removal is easily removed with enough water and perhaps a light scrub. Use a garden hose or sprayer. If using a pressure washer, use at low pressures under 103 bar and at safe distances, 30 cm above the deck, to avoid damaging your deck. Never use METAL shovels or sharp edged tools to remove snow and ice on the surface of any Fibron composite or PVC decking product.

Construction Chalk

Coloured chalk, used in construction for marking straight lines prior to cutting, is permanent on most surfaces. Contact the manufacturer of the specific brand and colour of chalk for a cleaning solution that may prove effective. The best advice is to avoid coloured chalk, using workable alternatives such as white chalk or baby powder.

Fire and Unusual Heat Sources

Composite decking will retain heat when exposed to direct or reflective sunlight. Exercise caution if walking barefoot as footwear may be required. Fire and unusual sources of heat and heat build-up can possibly damage Fibron decking surfaces. Examples would include fire, reflected light from different types of glass (ex. low-e glass), fire features and under-deck waterproofing installations that do not provide the 15 cm of unobstructed net free ventilation.

- *Low-E Glass/Reflected Heat*

Low-emissivity glass is designed to prevent heat gain inside the house by reflecting sunlight outward. This reflective property can result in excessive heat build on the surface of Fibron decking. The properties that Low-E glass employs to prevent passive heat gain within a structure can result in unusual heat build-up on exterior surfaces.

When the sunlight is reflected and concentrated it can harm a range of building materials that include doors, windows, cladding, trim and decking. Damage caused to these products can include melting, sagging, warping, discolouration, increased expansion and contraction, and accelerated weathering.

If you have questions on how to reduce this risk, contact the manufacturer of the product which contains the Low-E glass for suggestions on how to reduce or eliminate the reflected heat.

- *Under-deck waterproofing systems*

Under-deck waterproofing systems, properly installed, can provide additional living or storage space. Improper installations are those that restrict air flow and result in build-up of heat and/or humidity which can result in unwanted consequences. Contact the manufacturer of the specific under-deck waterproofing system for installation instructions to ensure the required 15 cm of unobstructed ventilation is achieved for Fibron decking. If already installed, seek methods to achieve the ventilation requirement.

- *Fire Features/Fire Pits*

Fire features and fire pits are increasingly popular in outdoor living environments. Fire can damage many building products including Fibron decking. Improperly installed fire features and fire pits can cause damage to the surface of Fibron decking via direct exposure to the flame or excessive radiated heat. Proper caution should be taken when designing, installing and using these features to ensure damage does not result.

Rubber Mats

Welcome mats or grill mats with a rubber, vinyl or latex backing can mark your deck. The marks can be removed, but to avoid them, use polypropylene mats or colourfast woven rugs only.

Static

Dry or windy environments may create a temporary condition of static electricity, which will vary depending on climate and site conditions.