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Removal of Lichen, Mould and Pollen from ColorCote® products

ColorCote® pre-painted metal products may be subject to lichen and mould growth and contamination from fallen pollen in some environments, requiring careful cleaning to avoid damage.

Lichen

Lichen is a naturally occurring phenomenon with its spores being dispersed by the wind. Lichen will grow even on inert materials such as G.R.P., glass, and painted or unpainted metal roofs. Time of wetness of a surface affects lichen and mould growth. Sheltered and shady environments are particularly conducive to its growth and although light-coloured roofs may stay wet for longer than dark roofs, it can equally proliferate in open areas on dark-coloured roofs. Lichen and mould retain moisture, are acidic, and have tiny roots that can penetrate a paint coating. Removal is necessary to prevent damage to the organic coating, but recolonisation is very likely. Where lichen has been treated, regular inspection should be undertaken to curtail the spread of re-growth.

If lichen or fungus is suspected, we recommend a spot test to confirm. Apply a 3 - 5% solution of sodium hypochlorite (household bleach in water) to a suspected area and leave for a few minutes. If lichen/fungus is present, the dark area will be destroyed by the bleach.



Lichen growth can be removed by the following process:

1. Wash down the roof or wall cladding with water and a soft bristle broom to remove loose/insecure growth. Note that use of a low-pressure spray (less than 1000 psi) is acceptable.
2. Wash the roof down with a 2% sodium hypochlorite solution. The table below shows the dilution required for different strength bleaches to give a 2% solution. A small amount of household detergent, (no more than 5 - 7 ml/litre water), may be added to the solution to improve wetting.
3. Apply bleach solution with a soft bristle broom, and leave for up to 5 minutes
4. Following removal of the lichen, wash all roofing and cladding down with clean, fresh water. A low-pressure spray, (<1000psi), may also be used at this stage.

% Sodium hypochlorite or % available chlorine in bleach	Dilution required for 1L of 2% sodium hypochlorite solution
10%	200ml bleach + 800ml water
5%	400ml bleach + 600ml water
4%	500ml bleach + 500ml water
3%	670ml bleach + 330ml water
2%	No dilution

Important: If rainwater is being collected from the roof, ensure that the lines between gutters and the collection tank are disconnected PRIOR to cleaning to avoid contamination.



Mould

Mould can be removed using the same method as that described above for Lichen. A spot test is not necessary for mould detection.

Pollen

Pollen is the fertilising element of flowering plants, consisting of fine, powdery, yellowish grains or spores. Pollen isn't necessarily detrimental to roofs over a short period. However, if it is allowed to rest on the roof, it may adhere to the painted surface and become difficult to remove, due to the pollen grain surface being covered with waxes and proteins.

Pollen deposits can be removed by the following process*:

1. As for Lichen and Mould removal, wash down the roof or wall cladding to remove any loose or unadhered pollen. A low-pressure spray (less than 1000 psi) is acceptable.
2. Wash the roof down with an effective detergent-based cleaning product such as "Transwash", (available locally through Marketing Chemicals Ltd. at www.mchem.co.nz/shop) or Wet & Forget, available through most major hardware/DIY outlets.
 - Always use these cleaning agents according to the manufacturer's instructions, taking particular note of the recommended dilution levels.
 - These products should be applied using a soft bristle broom, or a low-pressure spray (<1000psi).
3. Following removal of the pollen, wash all roofing and cladding down with copious amounts of clean, fresh water following treatment. Failure to do this may result in streaking on the metal coating.

Important: If rainwater is being collected from your roof, ensure that the lines between gutters and the collection tank are disconnected **PRIOR** to cleaning to avoid contamination.