

**...for us to do for them. Without you it wouldn't work!**

## HOUSE WASHING

by: Pete Case



We recommend washing a house with the intention of removing pollutants, surface oxidation, as well as mold and mildew. By doing this type of washing you provide customers with an excellent result and make competitors that wash a house with what EnviroSpec calls the "splash and dash" method look like amateurs. "Splash and Dash" refers to the person that splashes bleach or chlorine on the house, rinses and leaves. There are various levels of clean, and various qualities of work. We acknowledge that there are different ways to do most anything, but in our experience we have had great results giving house wash customers the "royal treatment". The

tools and supplies you need are your pressure washer, a quality house wash detergent, a brush and extension pole, and surface sealer. Most houses require washing siding too high to reach from the ground. So many times you will need to work from a ladder or use a telescoping wand. Washing a house with a pressure washer is accomplished in four steps. The four steps are detergent application, pressure washing, surface sealant application, and pressure rinsing.

**DETERGENT APPLICATION:** Apply detergent from concentrate through a downstream injector. Always apply detergents at low pressure. Always be careful not to force detergent under siding, what it finds under there can come out later. What can happen when detergent gets underneath the siding is it will emulsify (dissolve) pollutants and cause them to drip out over the siding later. After applying the detergent to a section of siding, switch to high pressure rinse and clear left over chemical from the line by spraying it on the foundation or steps. You can also back up about six feet and clear it onto the lower part of the siding, the trick is to not apply detergent under pressure to the siding. Always avoid getting detergent on the roof.

**DETERGENT PRODUCTS:** For washing most types of siding, use Limonene or Bio-Green. Premier is excellent to use on heavy oxidation. If you are working on a house that is covered heavily with mildew, use Emulsifier Plus with bleach. Ripper is made for gutter cleaning.

**PRESSURE WASHING SIDING:** The first step after clearing the pressure line is to rinse the windows. Do so quickly and immediately proceed to washing the siding. Wash the siding one row or clapboard at a time. Work from the top to the bottom. To properly wash houses you need to pressure wash each row of siding and pattern clean. Apply detergent to an area that is small enough so all pressure washing can be accomplished prior to the detergent drying on the surface.

Wash the gutters at the same time as the siding. If the gutter is a difficult one, use a pail with a small amount of detergent concentrate in it. Dip a brush on an extension pole into the detergent and brush the gutter for the best possible result. Many mobile washers don't consider the gutters to be part of washing a house. It's up to you, but it is part of doing a good job. It may be possible to do a "Splash and Dash" and get away without doing the gutters, but it will look really bad if the house is properly cleaned and the gutters are left dirty. As the siding is cleaned, work slowly back and forth with the nozzle about three to four inches off the surface. On heavily oxidized siding try running with hot water, around 150 degrees. Hot water helps cut surface oxidation. A water temperature in excess of 150 degrees is detrimental to detergent performance. After completing a section, rinse all windows thoroughly. Work the siding in sections until the house is completed. As we have said, to properly wash houses you need to pressure wash each row of siding and pattern clean. Pattern cleaning can be very important when working on heavy oxidation. On older aluminum siding removing the oxidation can restore the color. When doing this you need to carefully keep the top of the fan spray pattern at the top of the row on the siding and the bottom of the spray at the bottom. It is also important to stay a uniform distance from the siding, and to keep moving at the same speed. A trick is to feather into the area you are working on then feather out on the other side, similar to what you do when spray painting. Most sidings are not this demanding, but it's really important to know how to handle the ones that are. Always remember to apply detergent to an area that is small enough so all pressure washing can be accomplished prior to detergent drying on the surface.

One final tip, on old aluminum siding it's a good idea to test a small spot, low and inconspicuous, on a sunny side of the house. If it turns silver there may not be any good paint left on it. It is great to discover this prior to washing the paint off a large section of the house.

**SURFACE SEALER:** After completely pressure washing the siding, reverse direction and apply Plex Master surface sealer. Apply and rinse one section of the house at a time until completed. Applying a sealer gives you a service to advertise that most mobile wash companies don't offer.

**MASTER CARD VISA DISCOVER AMEX 1-800-346-4876**