

# STAINS & FINISHES

## Shakertown® siding panels are the practical answer where stained or painted shingles are desired.

*Shakertown recommends using quality oil finishes to maximize the life of your cedar shingle siding.*

- ▶ *Since Western Red Cedar is a durable wood species, Shakertown siding panels and shingle products can be left unfinished. To maximize the life of your siding, Shakertown recommends a quality oil stain or finish.*
- ▶ *While finishes can be applied after the product is installed, prefinishing is an efficient and economical approach. Shakertown siding panels may be prefinished by breaking bundles at the job site and staining or painting by conventional methods; or by a commercial applicator prior to delivery to the job.*
- ▶ *The beauty of Western Red Cedar is enhanced by its natural color variances. Stains and finishes can augment or subdue these natural characteristics.*

### 1. Stains.

Oil stains are the recommended finish agents for Shakertown cedar products as they allow natural moisture to escape without causing blistering and cracking of the coating film. Quality stains are formulated with penetrating type oils, usually providing a flat finish. There are four basic types of oil stains distinguished by the amount of pigment contained: transparent, semi-transparent, semi-solid and solid.

Shakertown recommends semi-transparent stains since they permit the natural wood grain and texture of cedar to show, while enough color pigment provides protection against Ultra Violet Rays for several years.

Transparent finishes are virtually clear and will enhance the natural color variances in cedar. These clear products provide very little protection against UV Rays, so the cedar will turn gray without regular maintenance or refinishing every couple years.

Semi-solid and solid stains are used when an opaque, colored appearance is desired. They provide more protection against the weather and require less maintenance.

It is important to use any stain in accordance with the directions of the manufacturer. Proper mixing and application are essential because of the thin consistency of the product. Frequent mixing is imperative to assure uniform dispersal of pigments across the entire job.

### 2. Paints.

In situations where a thicker coating is desired, an exterior paint may be used. These are available in latex, acrylic and oil formulations.

Discoloration of the paint by the natural cedar extractives (See section 5) can usually be avoided by first sealing with a good quality oil-based primer on all sides of the cedar siding. Many paint manufacturers sell products specially formulated for use over natural cedar. Since early application is essential to the effectiveness of such finishes, prefinishing may be the preferred approach (See Section 8).

### 3. Wood Preservatives.

Wood preservatives are fluid materials that penetrate into the wood, leaving little or no film on the surface. They are usually very effective at resisting rot and decay and in discouraging the growth of molds and other vegetation on the surface. Western Red Cedar is very resistant to decay, and preservative treatments are required only under extreme conditions. Since there is little pigment or surface film, they offer little protection against color change and do not protect against wear and abrasion where needed.

### 4. Bleaches/Weathering Stains.

For a natural, silvery gray appearance similar to that seen on old shingled buildings exposed to the sea air, there are a number of weathering and bleaching compounds which speed the natural weathering process. These finishes are also best applied as early as possible.

“Weathering” stains provide protection for the wood while allowing it to develop its natural coloration. These are usually soft gray transparent stains, providing a transition to the eventual weathered color without hiding the beauty of the cedar’s natural color and grain.

### 5. Discoloration or “Bleeding”.

One characteristic of Western Red Cedar is the presence of water-soluble color extractives, which may “bleed” out onto the surface and discolor white or light-colored paints. This is neither a fault of the wood or paint formulation, but rather an indication of the presence of moisture in the wall. This moisture may come through the surface of the paint if the film has fractured; or it may enter through cracks, apertures or other defects in the construction; or it may arise within the building and be carried through the walls. No change in type of paint, or similar approach will be successful in dealing with the problem unless the source of the moisture is located and cut off. Insufficient ventilation of some homes is the major problem, as substantial quantities of moisture are produced and retained by improper venting of vapor-producing appliances, inadequately louvered attics and crawl spaces, poorly installed insulation and vapor barriers. If a small amount of bleeding occurs during the first year, it is worthwhile waiting through this “shakedown” period because these surface deposits usually either weather away or can be washed off by using soap and water, or a stronger detergent if needed.

Surfactants leaching from latex paint is often confused with cedar extractives. Surfactants are water-soluble ingredients in paint that can come to the surface and will have a brown, blotchy appearance. These paint components appear when cold or humid conditions occur before the paint has fully cured. The surfactants can typically be washed off the surface and should not affect the performance of the paint.

### 6. Mildew.

Because it manifests itself as patchy, darkened

areas, mildew is frequently mistaken for bleeding or staining. A simple test for identifying mildew is to apply a small amount of household bleach (a 5% sodium hypochlorite solution) to the wall. If mildew is present, the darkened patch will disappear. If it remains, it is likely the wall is just dirty. When discovered, mildew should always be removed. It will reappear if painted over. Commercial preparations are readily available for treatment. The paint chosen for refinishing should contain sufficient fungicide to help repel future attacks.

### 7. Refinishing.

Refinishing of Shakertown siding panels is simple and follows the normal procedure for renewing any wood surface. It must be free of loose matter such as dirt, dust, peeling paint or excessive chalking of the old film. A stiff brush should be used to remove all foreign matter, allowing the new finish to adhere properly. If mildew is present, proceed as suggested in the previous paragraph (Section 6).

### 8. Prefinishing.

**On-Site:** All new wood should be clean and dry before any coating is applied. The surface should also be brushed to remove all loose wood fibers.

Bundles of Shakertown siding panels should be opened by cutting the strapping and the panels separated at a spot as close as possible to where they will be installed. They may be placed flat on saw horses or a simple lumber-framed inclined rack for ease of finishing. Brush application is always recommended for both better penetration and greater uniformity. A natural bristle brush is best with oil-base products, and a synthetic bristle brush is best with latex. Brush pad and roller are also good methods. Spray application is an acceptable second choice and, with oil-base products, must be followed immediately by back-brushing or dry-rolling.

**Mechanical Application:** Custom prefinishing facilities now operate in most sections of the country. These firms will take Shakertown siding panels delivered by yourself or your supplier, separate the bundles and prefinish to your specification, and re-bundle for delivery or your pick-up.

Stain and coating data based on information supplied by the National Paint and Coatings Association.

*If you have any questions regarding this or any other topic, please call Shakertown toll free: 1-800-426-8970.*

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