



## TECHNICAL BULLETIN 4.02

### Preparation of Painted Surfaces for Truck and Automotive

This bulletin details specific surface preparation and application instructions of vinyl graphic products onto non-vehicular surfaces. Applications will be successful if the instructions are followed completely.

#### GENERAL SURFACE PREPARATIONS:

All surfaces are considered contaminated until properly cleaned. Thus, all surfaces **MUST** be cleaned prior to any application of vinyl graphic products. See the following steps:

1. Wash the surface with detergent and water, then thoroughly rinse the surface with water and dry completely.
2. Saturate a clean cloth with a solvent approved by local EPA regulations and wipe the surface to remove any contaminants such as silicone, wax, chalk or adhesives.
3. Dry the surface with a lint free towel before the solvent evaporates.
4. Spray the surface with isopropyl alcohol (recommended) or BETCO® CitruSolv degreaser; follow immediately to dry the surface with clean dry towel. This should remove any residue remaining from the cleaning solvent.

#### SPECIFIC SURFACE PREPARATIONS:

The following recommendations describe surface preparation procedures. All surfaces need to be evaluated to determine if they meet performance criteria as detailed.

#### SURFACE PREPARATIONS FOR:

- Fiberglass
  1. Use general cleaning procedures outlined above
  2. Gelcoat cracking of the fiberglass may cause applied vinyl also to crack.
- Roll Up Doors
  1. Metal doors use the general cleaning procedures outlined above.
  2. Fiberboard doors are subject to moisture absorption and is often a marginal application surface. To prevent failure of vinyl graphic adhesion the door must have a thick, smooth coating of paint. Use general cleaning procedures outlined above.
- Chalked and Weathered Paint
  1. Avoid paint finishes which tend to chalk such as flat metallics.
  2. Use mechanical buffing to remove chalked and weathered paint.
  3. Follow with general cleaning procedures outline above.
- Newly Painted
  1. Follow all drying and curing instructions provided by the paint manufacture prior to any surface preparation.
  2. Baked enamels can be immediately cleaned after cooling.
  3. Air-dried paints require five days of drying time before surface preparation.

#### NON RECOMMENDED PAINT SURFACES:

Avoid the use of the following paint finishes; always test adhesion and paint/adhesion compatibility prior to surface preparation and application of vinyl graphics.

1. Highly pigmented or flat metallic paints which tend to chalk and flake.
2. Flat latex paint on metal or wood substrates.
3. Paint containing migratory agents, such as chlorinated waxes and silicones.
4. Oil alkyd primers and enamels because of slow cure times.

#### RECOMMENDED PAINT SURFACES:

Always test adhesion and paint/adhesion compatibility prior to surface preparation and application of vinyl graphics.

1. High quality exterior grade paints.
2. OEM paint systems.

#### URETHANE PAINT SYSTEMS AND CLEAR COATS:

Outgassing can occur which will cause bubbling of applied vinyl graphics.

1. A minimum of 5 days curing time at 70 degrees F or above is required.  
Less than 5 days requires testing for outgassing.
2. Properly clean surface and apply a 2-inch by 2-inch piece of vinyl to the paint.
3. Check the test sample after 24 hours for bubbles due to outgassing. If no evidenced of bubbles application can be done.

Due to the extremely smooth surface of some paints, applied vinyl may not initially exhibit maximum adhesion. A short period of exposure will be necessary before maximum adhesion is obtained.