

Glass Cleaning Recommendations

Cardinal's Recommendations

Before cleaning glass surfaces, check for exterior coatings applied by the glass manufacturer and review their cleaning procedures. Certain glass cleaning products may harm these coatings.

One of the common mistakes made by non-glass trade people, including glass cleaning contractors, is their use of razor blades and other metal scrapers on a large portion of the glass surface. Using metal blades to scrape a window carries a large probability for causing irreparable damage to glass.

Cardinal recommends metal blades never be used to remove materials from glass surfaces. Any use of a metal blade or other inappropriate or destructive cleaning techniques is at the risk of the owner/window cleaner and Cardinal's warranties do not cover glass scratching.

Glass Industry's Recommendations

The National Glass Association (NGA), Glass Association of North America (GANA), and International Window Cleaning Association (IWCA) published the glass cleaning recommendations titled "*FB01-00 Proper Procedures for Cleaning Architectural Glass Products*". Available free online from NGA. The recommendations in this publication can be used for commercial or residential glass products and may reduce the opportunity of damage to glass surfaces during cleaning.

By following the recommendations in the NGA-GANA-IGCA FB01-00 publication, scratching of glass products should be significantly reduced, and the cleaning recommendations listed will ensure that the glass will be cleaned according to industry recommendations.

Glass Processing – Manufacturing History

During manufacturing and processing, glass surfaces are exposed to a number of processes and materials, which can leave a residue on the glass surface. During the manufacturing of float glass, coated glass, tempered glass and insulating glass, the glass surfaces are exposed to vacuum cups, rollers, packaging materials (paper, cardboard, foam, cork, hot melt, etc.), glass production labels, and the window manufacturer's labels.

Materials that come into contact with the glass surfaces during glass processing, window fabrication, and installation can leave a residue on the glass that may be visible under normal viewing conditions, or only when moisture is present on the glass surface (i.e. rainwater, condensation, etc.). Visible residue that can be cleaned from the glass surface or residue that is only visible when moisture is present is not considered to be a glass defect and should not be replaced because of this condition.

Cleaning Guide

Below is a helpful guide on what to "do" and "don't do" when cleaning glass surfaces:

Actions to "Do":

- Do read the NGA-GANA-IWCA publication for cleaning glass
- Do clean glass when dirt, residue, and other contaminants appear with a mild non-abrasive window cleaning solution
- Do dry all cleaning solutions from the window sealants, gaskets, and frames
- Do determine if exterior coatings are present on glass surfaces
- Do soak the glass surface with clean water and soap solution
- Do use a rubber squeegee, cloth, or paper towel to remove cleaning solution
- Do clean a small window and check no damage will occur

Actions to “Don’t Do”:

- Don’t clean tinted or coated glass in direct sunlight
- Don’t use scrapers or razor blades for cleaning glass
- Don’t allow materials to contact or lean against the glass surfaces
- Don’t allow dirt and residue to remain on glass surfaces for an extended period of time
- Don’t allow water or cleaning solutions to remain on glass surfaces or window components
- Don’t use abrasive cleaning solutions or materials on glass surfaces

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