

Staining your Log or Timber Home

By Michigan Wood Products



STAINING DO'S AND DON'TS

Proper preparation of your log siding product before staining, as well as the staining procedure itself, can ensure that your finished logs or log siding exceeds your expectations or the expectations of your client. Here are some valuable tips for the proper preparation of the wood,

and application of wood staining products.

Log Quality is Critical: The sap-ring in log measures 2/3 the diameter of the tree trunk. Sap causes what is typically seen as a blued or black blotches on the wood -- even with the very best of stain applications! ALL the sapwood should be pulled aside during the drying and milling process. Simply stated, using inferior log siding products milled from sapwood may be inexpensive to begin with, but in the long run will cost more time and effort to maintain and will result in less satisfaction with the appearance of the home.

Prepare the Log Siding: Use a TSP wash (Tri Sodium Phosphate) to open up the cellular structure of the wood so the stain will penetrate further into the grain.

Stain Quality: It's always best to research the different stain qualities available at your local stain store. Check online to make sure you are getting the quality you want for the money you want to spend. There are a wide range of products, and of course, the best products are the most expensive. Even a quality stain will not wear well if preparation is inadequate or sun exposure is excessive. Look for guarantees and for stain life expectancies as published by the manufacturer. Follow all manufacturers' recommendations for product preparation and stain application.

Stain Application: Stain doesn't go on like a coating of paint and doesn't function like paint in the protection of your log siding product. Unlike paint, stain is designed to soak into the wood. Two healthy coats of stain back-brushed into the wood itself are much better than one heavy coat of stain, which sits on the surface. If you apply your stain like a thick coat of paint, the stain will ultimately chip, crack and peel.

Color Choice: The predominant enemy of stain is the UV rays of the sun. Lighter stain colors will fail faster than darker stain colors because UV rays penetrate further into the lighter colored product.

Limit Sun Exposure: If you are still designing your home, you might want to position your home in relation to the sun in order to minimize sun exposure. It's always good to have an 18 – 24 inch overhanging soffit on your roof to keep your log siding out of the sun as much as possible.