



## HOW TO CLEAN TEAK

A major portion of TEAKDECKING SYSTEMS business is replacing existing teak decks that have been worn out through improper maintenance. Amazingly, many of these decks were destroyed not through neglect, but because their owners cleaned them too often and too thoroughly.

Overuse, or improper use, of two part caustic cleaners shortens the life of teak decks by actually eating away the teak. These cleaners should only be used when everything else has been tried. If they must be used, follow their instructions carefully. If you need to use such cleaners, protect your skin (hands, arms, bare feet, legs, and eyes). The caustic cleaner will also attack surrounding paint. The paint can be somewhat protected by wetting down the surfaces before starting and continuing to flush them during the cleaning process. Remember to flush topsides below scuppers and drains to prevent damage to the paint as the deck drains down the side of the hull. After using a two part cleaner, be sure to rinse the deck thoroughly. Any remaining cleaner will continue to “eat” the deck and surrounding surfaces.

Clearly, we do not recommend two part cleaners except, perhaps, as a last resort. TEAKDECKING SYSTEMS has developed two biodegradable cleaners that are designed to be thorough, yet gentle. The first, TCP 100, is a powdered cleaner for weekly to bi-weekly cleanings. The second, TCL 200, is a liquid designed for deeper cleaning that might be necessary on a monthly basis. These cleaners can be obtained from one of our distributors, or directly from TEAKDECKING SYSTEMS. If you do not have TCP 100 or TCL 200 on hand, a solution of water and mild household cleaner or sudsy ammonia will work reasonably well. **DO NOT USE CHLORINE BLEACH** in an attempt to bleach the decks. Chlorine will attack most caulking products, turning them to goo.

The wood should be scrubbed across the grain with a 3-M scrubbing pad or a polypropylene bristle brush. Scrubbing with the grain tears the soft grain out of the planks, leaving the surface rough. A rough, weathered deck exposes more of the wood to environmental deterioration. On larger areas, use of rotary cleaning machines with dispenser tanks and polypropylene bristle brushes is appropriate.

Even with care, in time the surface of the wood will become uneven. When this happens, the decks should be lightly sanded with a sanding machine to smooth the surface. This will actually increase the life of the deck by exposing less wood to the elements and preventing the grain from trapping dirt or air carried corrosives.

As the deck is drying after having been cleaned and flushed, notice any areas that remain wet after the rest of the deck has dried. Wetness may indicate a spot where the caulking in a seam has broken away from the teak, or a bung that has gone bad. If so, these failures should be repaired immediately to prevent water from getting under the deck. Once water is under the teak, a number of things can happen, and none of them are good. If you can't make an immediate repair, duct tape the opening to seal it temporarily.



# **CAUTION**

## ***WARNING AGAINST USE OF ACID CLEANERS/RUST REMOVERS ON TEAK DECKS***

Generally, rust cleaners contain acids -- either in liquid or powder forms, which can vary greatly in strengths in accordance with the application intended for the product. Acids are also classified as either organic or mineral, i.e., oxalic acid is an example of organic and phosphoric acid is an example of a mineral acid. Both of these substances are commonly used in rust cleaners.

Acids may have the effect of softening the caulking in the seams of our panels and the resulting softening will lead to seam failure over a period of time. Once a crack opens between the seam and the wood, it allows cleaning solutions to collect in the cracks where it cannot be easily rinsed out, and seam failure accelerates.

The "cleaning" action of acids appears to be very effective, because the acid actually removes some of the material being cleaned -- in our case, the wood and the caulking. Over time, enough material may be removed to compromise the integrity of the wood where it meets the caulking seam, causing a crack, which, as described above, accelerates the failure of the adhesion of the caulk to wood.

Additionally, unless the acid cleaning solution is neutralized (by rinsing with an alkaline solution after it is applied) the corrosive action of the acid may continue for some time, even after the solution is dry. Rinsing with water is not sufficient to stop this action.

As part of a regular maintenance program, TDS Powdered Teak Cleaner can be used on a weekly basis. This cleaner is very effective as a general purpose cleaning agent, especially when used with hot water, and is environmentally safe as well as user friendly, since it is completely biodegradable and contains no acids, caustics, or bleaches.

We recommend that a non-corrosive alkaline cleaner, such as TDS LIQUID TEAK CLEANER be used on a monthly basis. This product contains a very effective degreasing agent for cleaning teak decks and is very efficient for stubborn stains such as soot, grease or oil. The cleaner can be applied full strength on the areas affected and allowed to work before the entire deck is cleaned. This product is also biodegradable and non-hazardous to the environment or user when used as directed.

**In no case can we recommend the use of acid type cleaners for cleaning wood decks, even if mixed with alkaline cleaners. Use of acid cleaners will invalidate warranties on our decks.**

The above information is based on our years of experience in maintaining teak decks and the principles of basic chemistry. While it is not intended as a scientific study, we believe it to be accurate and solidly based.

### **TEAK OIL**

We do not recommend the use of oils on exterior teakdecking. Teakwood contains natural oils and to treat the decking with oil is not at all necessary. If the use of an oil or sealer is preferred for cosmetic reasons, do not use oils containing kerosene or other petroleum products, which will damage the caulking. Check ingredients carefully.

# TDS TEAK CLEANERS



TEAKDECKING SYSTEMS offers two acid-free, environmentally safe products for cleaning teak decks. Both products have been formulated to be effective teak cleaners that do not damage the teak, the caulking, or any of the surrounding painted or gel coated surfaces unlike caustic 2-part cleaners.

**TDS Powdered Teak Cleaner (TCP)** is a concentrated cleaner that can be either sprinkled directly on the teak for heavy duty dirt and grime removal or mixed with water for a more general purpose, regularly scheduled cleaning of teak. This product is particularly good at killing the mold and bacteria that may grow on teak in some environments. Mixed with water, for general teak cleaning, TCP is a more economical solution for cleaning teak decks.

**TDS Liquid Teak Cleaner (TLC)** is an alkaline based non-toxic cleaner that has all of the cleaning power of our TCP (powdered cleaner) in an easy to use, pre-mixed formula. TLC is excellent for removing dirt and heavy stains, particularly oil, soot-based stains and fish blood. Gentle enough to be poured directly on the teak, just scrub it and wash off. TCL is perfect for those quick, bucket-free clean-up jobs or, as part of a general wash down, when you just want to brighten or freshen up your teak without taking the time to mix a special teak-cleaning solution.

Neither one of these products contain acids, or caustic soda in concentrations that are considered to be hazardous to the user, the environment, or for transport and storage. Of course, common sense and reasonable care must be used, as with any chemical product. Rubber gloves and boots, as well as eye protection are always in order when working with any cleaning compound.

**The key to getting the best results with these products is a combination of the right equipment and application process. Please read instructions on label.**



## ***TEAKDECK CLEANING MAINTENANCE***

**1. DAILY**

Hose off with Plain Water

**2. WEEKLY**

Clean with **TCP 100 Teak Cleaner Powder**

**3. MONTHLY (or when necessary)**

Clean with **TCL 200 Teak Cleaner Liquid**

**NOTE: FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE LABELS.**

The TCP 100 Powder can also be used as a multi-purpose cleaner for, among other things, exterior furniture and painted surfaces.

# TCP 100

## TEAK CLEANER POWDER



Teak Cleaner Powder is a specially-formulated cleaner that can be mixed at various concentrations to be effective for both light and heavy cleaning. Teak Cleaner Powder is designed to not harm your teak, caulking, hardware or paint. Teak Cleaner Powder contains no acid or caustic soda and is not hazardous to the user or the environment. Teak Cleaner Powder represents the state-of-the-art in cleaning ready-to-use formulations to clean your teak or other surfaces.

Warranty: Teak Cleaner Powder will perform as specified when directions are followed. No other warranty is expressed or implied. Liability limited to purchase price only.

### DIRECTIONS:

#### FOR LIGHT CLEANING:

1. Mix 1/4 to 1/2 cup Teak Cleaner Powder with 1 gallon of water (preferably hot).
2. Brush mixture onto surface, scrubbing across the grain.
3. Allow to remain on the surface for up to 15 minutes, but do NOT allow to dry
4. Hose surface with water.

#### FOR HEAVY CLEANING:

1. DO wet the deck first.
2. Do NOT dilute in water.
3. Scatter powder sparingly over the deck.
4. Scrub thoroughly across the grain with a polypropylene scrub brush.
5. Rinse thoroughly.
6. Squeegee off excess water

#### FIRST AID:

**Keep out of the reach of children.** In case of contact with eyes or skin, rinse immediately with plenty of water for 15 minutes and seek medical attention. If swallowed promptly drink a large quantity of water. **Do NOT induce vomiting.** Seek medical attention. See MSDS for further information.

# TCL 200 TEAK CLEANER LIQUID



Teak Cleaner Liquid is a specially-formulated cleaner that is effective for both light and heavy cleaning in a ready-to-use form. Teak Cleaner Liquid is designed to not harm your teak, caulking, hardware or paint. Teak Cleaner Liquid contains no acid and is not hazardous to the user or the environment. Teak Cleaner Liquid represents the state-of-the-art in cleaning ready-to-use formulations to clean your teak or other surfaces.

Warranty: Teak Cleaner Liquid will perform as specified when directions are followed. No other warranty is expressed or implied. Liability limited to purchase price only.

## DIRECTIONS:

### FOR LIGHT CLEANING:

1. Lightly wet down the areas to be cleaned with water
2. Apply cleaner full strength and scrub with soft bristle brush or 3M scrub pad.  
Allow to soak for 10 minutes.
3. Always scrub cross grain (not with the grain).
4. If surface starts to dry, apply more cleaner.
5. Rinse thoroughly with water.

### FOR HEAVY CLEANING:

1. Do NOT wet the deck first
2. Follow directions 2-5 above

## FIRST AID:

**Keep out of reach of children.** May cause skin irritation. Avoid contact with skin or eyes. Harmful if swallowed. Avoid contamination of food.

In case of contact with eyes or skin, rinse immediately with plenty of water for 15 minutes and seek medical attention. If swallowed, promptly drink a large quantity of water. **Do not induce vomiting.** Seek medical attention. See MSDS for further information.