

EXTERIOR/SEALANT CARE

The exterior surface of your motor home has an automotive finish. Frequent washing and thorough cleaning is recommended to prevent damage to the vehicle finish after exposure to damaging salts, calcium chloride, road tar, tree sap, insects and other foreign material. Never wash the vehicle in direct sunlight, while the vehicle surface is hot or using hot water.

Do not use strong soaps or detergents for washing the motor home. Always use a mild soap in warm water, a commercially prepared product for cleaning automotive finishes or your local car wash. Be careful when using pressure-type washers to avoid loosening exterior decals or sealants, etc.

Corrosive materials such as those used for ice and snow removal and dust control also accumulate on the underside of a vehicle. These materials should be removed by flushing the underbody regularly with water, especially areas where mud and other foreign materials collect.

Film graphics used on Winnebago Industries motor homes are die cut from the finest "cast" vinyl. High quality cast vinyl assures that the graphics will be dimensionally stable and long lasting. A pressure sensitive backing is used to bond the graphic to the exterior surface of the motor home.

Film graphics require little maintenance and should be treated similarly to a painted surface. Some suggestions for care include:

1. Wash the motor home graphics with plain soap and water, or any car wash soap. Rinse thoroughly.
2. Keep high-pressure nozzles at least 18 inches from the edge of the graphics. High-pressure spray may cause the edge of the graphic to peel.
3. Test cleaning solutions on a small section of the graphic before using on the entire surface.
4. Do not use aromatic solvents such as acetone, M.E.K., toluene, paint thinner or lacquer thinner on the graphics. Solvents may soften or smear colors.
5. Do not overcoat the graphic with clear plastic.
6. Do not allow gasoline or other fuels to drip or remain on graphics for any length of time. If a spill occurs, wipe off and rinse with water immediately.
7. Do not paint over graphics.
8. Do not apply wax over graphics, especially if the wax contains a petroleum distillate. Wax that has dried between stripes can be removed by softening it with rubbing alcohol and cotton swabs. Make sure the area is rinsed after cleaning.
9. Care and caution should be taken when storing the vehicle. Vinyl graphics and other items such as dashboards, tires and flexible rubber products will have a shorter life expectancy when exposed to severe heat and sunlight.

Winnebago Industries has always been proactive in recommending regular inspections of all exterior

sealants and replacing questionable areas. Company operator manuals have stressed the importance of proper care since 1969 (the oldest manual we could locate).

For newer vehicles we have provided exterior sealant information with the coach in the form of a sealants callout sheet. These are also available on our website, www.winnebagoind.com, under Resources/Manuals and Diagrams.

Please note that our callout sheets do not necessarily identify every seal on the vehicle that requires attention. For example, some skylights and roof vents, refrigerator vents and exterior access panels, and many sidewall features such as clearance and porch lights may not be pointed out individually. Common sense dictates that they all need attention, as even the best quality sealant products do age and will fail. Another area that may be overlooked is the roof edge that inserts into the sidewall j-trim. In this instance, the sealant does double duty as both water leak prevention and securing the skin in the channel. As in other applications, exposure to the elements and flexing of the vehicle can degrade this seam.

Because of the important role that sealants play in protecting the vehicle from the elements, it is imperative that they be inspected at a minimum of every six months or any time that the integrity of the seal or seam is in question. During inspection, you should be looking for any cracks, voids, gaps, breaks or physical degradation in the sealants or seals. Any irregularities should be repaired promptly. If an irregularity is found, it is necessary to remove the damaged seal or sealant and replace it.

Note: Proper sealant inspection includes not just visual observation but running a finger along sealant seams to verify proper adhesion to the surface. Any loosened areas must be replaced.

There are currently three basic types of sealants used on the exterior of Winnebago Industries produced vehicle: silicone-based, urethane-based, and solvent based.

Because different based sealants are not compatible, it is imperative that the proper product is used when resealing. In other words, if a non-compatible sealant is used, the two materials will repel each other and allow moisture and debris to penetrate the seal. Ascertaining whether a sealant is silicone, urethane or solvent based can be difficult for someone not knowledgeable or proficient in resealing. As a general rule, urethane sealants cure to a more firm and rigid form. Solvent-based sealants can cure to either pliable or firm states depending on the particular sealant. Silicone sealants tend to remain more pliable. Silicone sealants will retain a higher gloss after curing. Urethane sealants are colored. Silicone can be clear or colored. Solvent based can be clear or colored.