

Steel Surface Preparations

The following are general descriptions of Steel Structures Painting Council surface preparation specifications. For complete specifications refer to the latest SSPC manual.

SSPC-SP-1 - SOLVENT CLEANING

Solvent cleaning is a method for removing all visible oil, grease, soil, drawing and cutting compounds and other soluble contaminants from steel surfaces. Prior to solvent cleaning, remove foreign matter by one or a combination of the following: brush with stiff or wire brushes, abrade, scrape, or clean with solutions of appropriate cleaners, provided such cleaners are followed by a fresh water rinse. After solvent cleaning, remove dirt, dust and other contaminants from the surface prior to paint application. Acceptable methods include brushing, blow off with clean, dry air, or vacuum cleaning.

SSPC-SP-2 - HAND TOOL CLEANING

Hand tool cleaning is a method of preparing steel surfaces by use of non-power hand tools. Hand tool cleaning removes all loose mil scale, loose rust, loose paint, and other loose detrimental foreign matter. It is not intended that adherent mil scale, rust, and paint be removed by this process. Mil scale, rust, and paint are considered adherent if they cannot be removed by lifting with a dull putty knife.

SSPC-SP-3 - POWER TOOL CLEANING

Power tool cleaning is a method of preparing steel surfaces by use of power assisted hand tools. Power tool cleaning removes all loose mil scale, loose rust, loose paint, and other loose detrimental foreign matter. It is not intended that adherent mil scale, rust, and paint be removed by this process. Mil scale, rust, and paint are considered adherent if they cannot be removed by lifting with a dull putty knife.

SSPC-SP-5 - WHITE METAL BLAST CLEANING

White metal blast cleaning is a method of preparing steel surfaces which, when viewed without magnification, shall be free of all visible oil, grease, dirt, dust, mil scale, rust and paint. The surface shall be cleaned to a gray-white metallic color. The appearance of the surface may be affected by the particular blasting abrasive used. Uniformity of color may be affected by the grade, original surface condition, and configuration of the material being cleaned, as well as by discolorations from mil or fabrication marks, and the shadowing from blast cleaning patterns.

SSPC-SP-6 - COMMERCIAL BLAST CLEANING

Commercial blast cleaning is a method of preparing steel surfaces which, when viewed without magnification, shall be free of all visible oil, grease, dirt, dust, mil scale, rust and paint. Generally, evenly dispersed very light shadows, streaks, and discolorations caused by stains of rust, stains of mil scale and scales of previously applied paint may remain on more than 33% of the surface. Slight residues of rust and paint may also be left in the craters of pits if the original surface is pitted.

SSPC-SP-7 - BRUSH-OFF BLAST CLEANING

Brush-off blast cleaning is a method of preparing steel surfaces which, when viewed without magnification, shall be free of all visible oil, grease, dirt, dust, mil scale, rust and paint. Tightly adherent mil scale, rust, and paint may remain on the surface. Mil scale, rust, and paint are considered adherent if they cannot be removed by lifting with a dull putty knife.



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SSPC-SP-8 - PICKLING

Pickling is a method of preparing steel surfaces by chemical reaction, electrolysis, or both. The surfaces when viewed without magnification, shall be free of all visible mil scale and rust. Uniformity of color may be affected by the grade, original surface condition, and configuration of the material being cleaned, as well as by discolorations from mil or fabrication marks and the shadowing from etching patterns.

SSPC-SP-10 - NEAR-WHITE BLAST CLEANING

Near-white blast cleaning is a method of preparing steel surfaces which, when viewed without magnification, shall be free of all visible oil, grease, dirt, dust, mil scale, rust and paint. Generally, evenly dispersed very light shadows, streaks, and discolorations caused by stains of rust, stains of mil scale and scales of previously applied paint may remain on more than 5% of the surface.

Copies of the complete specifications may be obtained from:

**Steel Structures Painting Council
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