



FABRICATED MAINTENANCE

Metal Letters

All Gemini metal letters (except anodized and stainless steel) are coated with a clear poly paint to help protect the metal from corrosion. Based on where the letters are installed, periodic cleaning of this coating may be required. Wash these letters with a soft cloth and warm, soapy (dish washing liquid) water. Cleaning with harsh cleaners that contain chemicals is not recommended, as this may damage the clear poly coating. We recommend cleaning every few months, or as needed to preserve the original finish.

Repairing Paint Scratches

Scratches in letters can be a distraction, especially with interior installations. Smaller scratches can be minimized by first washing the letter, then applying car wax and buffing the scratch with a soft cloth. Deeper scratches can be removed by wet sanding with extra fine grit sandpaper. Sand the scratch, wipe dry with a soft cloth and apply a liquid paste such as Finesse-it to the scratch. Buff out the scratch with an auto paint repair buffing wheel. Deep scratches that cannot be buffed out will have to be sanded with 1200 grit paper, then re-painted.

Stainless Steel

Gemini's stainless steel fabricated letters are provided without a clear poly coating. While this metal is designed to stain or corrode less than other metals, periodic cleaning may be required to retain the original luster and preserve corrosion resistance. Stainless steel is protected from corrosion by a thin layer of chromium oxide. Oxygen from the atmosphere combines with the chromium in the stainless steel to form this passive chromium oxide film that protects the steel from further corrosion. Any contamination of the surface by dirt, or other materials, hinders this passivation process and traps corrosive agents, thus further reducing corrosion protection. Therefore, routine cleaning not only protects the letters appearance, but also the integrity of the metal. As with coated metal, these letters can be cleaned with a liquid soap and warm water. Depending on the level of dirt or grime, additional cleaning may be required by using a water and white vinegar solution and a soft cloth. Always wipe letter faces in the same direction as the grain. Should polishing be required, use a good stainless polish such as Wenol metal polish and a soft cloth to reshine the letters. Coastal or deicing salts, atmospheric contaminants, inappropriate cleaning products, and superficial carbon steel or iron contamination can cause corrosion or rust staining. In some parts of the world, you can obtain mild abrasive (200 mesh or finer calcium carbonate) household cleaners that contain dilute acids that are very effective in dissolving rust stains. The acids that are often used for this purpose are citric acid, nitric acid, phosphoric acid, and oxalic acid. Do not use any product that contains hydrochloric acid for this purpose because it can cause surface corrosion. The potential environmental impact of using acid must be assessed before use. They are the products that are most typically used for restoring neglected stainless steel building exteriors and are usually sufficient. There are also commercial rust removal products that are specifically designed for use on stainless steel. Do not use a general "rust removal" product without identifying its ingredients and determining if they are acceptable for use on stainless steel. Test any new product on a small stainless steel surface prior to use to make sure that it does not cause color change. Should mild soap and water not work, the next solution is to use a mild non-scratching abrasive or chemical such as household cleaners. Most cleaners can be used with warm water, a soft brush, sponge or clean cloth. Depending on the material being cleaned, it is recommended that you always

test clean a small less obvious space first to determine the effect of your cleaner on the letters. Fingerprints and Stains - Fingerprints and mild stains usually affect only appearance seldom have an effect on corrosion resistance. They are easy to remove by a variety of simple cleaning methods. Fingerprints can be removed with a glass cleaner, white vinegar or by gently rubbing the surface with a paste of soda ash (sodium carbonate) and water applied with a soft rag. Follow this with a thorough warm water rinse. The key is to not use any cleaner that contains chlorine. Use acetone, methyl alcohol or mineral spirits.

Care of Stainless Steel

The cleaner stainless steel can be kept, the greater assurance of optimum corrosion resistance. Always handle stainless steel with clean gloves or clothes to guard against stains or finger marks. Avoid the use of any oily rags or greasy cloths when wiping the surface. Always thoroughly rinse letters with water, after any cleaning. Polished stainless should be cleaned by wiping in the direction of the grain (not in circles or across the metal grain).