

Perma-Chink Systems News

Spring Cleaning

The Log Home Care and Maintenance Authority

Dear Friends,

A day spent at one of our very informative hands-on workshops all across the United States and Canada is a worthwhile investment. We will give you hints and tips gathered from years of experience in the industry on how to maintain your log home. Lunch is provided and there are lots of door prizes to win. Make a reservation at the next available workshop near you and come join the fun!

We are also looking forward to seeing you at the upcoming shows and seminars. Please stop by at our booth and learn more about Perma-Chink Systems.

Please check www.permachink.com for a complete schedule and more information about our upcoming events.



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www.permachink.com

Cleaning Exterior Walls

■ Spring Maintenance

A light cleaning once or twice a year will help prolong the life of the exterior finish. We recommend cleaning your home twice a year with *Log Wash™*, once in the spring after the pollen season is complete and also in the fall as a preparatory phase for the winter.

Wash your exterior finish just like you wash your car. The objective is to remove dirt, grime, pollen and surface mold and mildew without harming the finish. It is also a necessary procedure to perform to determine the condition of your finish.

Soaps and detergents do a good job in removing dirt and grime but be careful about what you use. Some products leave a residue that may be difficult to rinse off.

Log Wash is liquid concentrate, maintenance cleaner for bare wood or existing stained surfaces. *Log Wash* is **environmentally friendly** and designed to remove dirt, grime, pollen and surface mold and mildew without harming the wood or existing finish as long as the existing finish is in good condition.

Apply the *Log Wash* solution with a pump up sprayer by starting at the bottom of the wall and working your way up. Work in small areas so that the *Log Wash* solution remains on the wall surface for 5-10 minutes. Do not allow cleaning solution to dry on the surface. Gently scrub the wall with a soft bristle brush. Rinse thoroughly with a garden hose from top to bottom. Pressure washing is not recommended.

Use *Log Wash* and a soft bristled brush to clean your wood decks and porches. Please visit our website for more information or give us a call.



Photo by Jack Frost Construction, WA

Issue #1

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Spring 2007

Checks and Splits in Logs

■ *How and when to seal*

By Vince Palmere

Checks and splits in logs present a different set of dynamics than those typically addressed by a caulk. They open and close as the log's moisture content varies throughout the year. The opening width of a check may change as much as 50% from summer to winter. Most caulks are designed to cope with a different set of conditions and are ill suited for sealing checks. Products like our *Check Mate* are specifically formulated to meet the particular requirements for sealing checks that appear in log homes.

Why should checks be sealed in the first place? Upward facing checks will collect water increasing the interior moisture content of the log. This eventually results in rot and insect damage. They also provide nesting sites for carpenter ants and other insects. If left unattended, checks can continue to grow until they produce an opening into the interior of your home.

Like other flexible sealants *Check Mate* should be used in conjunction with *Backer Rod* whenever sealing a gap that's more than 1/4 inch wide.



Make sure the *Backer Rod* is shoved into the check around 3/8 to 1/2 inch deep to allow room for the *Check Mate*.

Since *Check Mate* comes in various colors you should choose a color that is close to the color of the logs. However, if you are planning to stain over the *Check Mate*, choose a color that's a shade lighter than the stain. That way the *Check Mate* will blend in with the surrounding stained wood.

It is not necessary to seal checks on the bottom half of round logs since they rarely penetrate all the way through the log and do not collect water. However, for a uniform appearance you may want to seal them too.

When to seal checks with Check Mate is a question we often get asked. The answer really depends on individual situations. If a home is new and the logs green, it is best to wait a year or so before attacking the checks. This allows the logs to reach an equilibrium with their environment and by then most of the larger checks will have opened.

On seasoned wood or an older home that's in the process of being refinished you can apply *Check Mate* either before or after applying the stain. But if the wood within the check is damp from cleaning, rain or a borate treatment (it is always a good idea to treat an existing check with *Shell-Guard RTU* before sealing it), make sure the check has time to dry before applying *Check Mate*. The last thing you want to do is to trap any water within the check.

The weather also has some bearing on using *Check Mate*. In cool, damp weather it takes a couple of days for *Check Mate* to cure. Under these conditions protecting the *Check Mate* filled check with a loose covering of plastic film will help speed the curing process and prevent heavy rain from washing soft *Check Mate* out of the check.

Our sales team got together this year for a National Sales Meeting in Las Vegas, NV.

We thank our Corporate Sponsors for their support

TruFast LLC (Mr. Tommy Morr)

Dorsey & Whitney LLC (Mr. Bill Toone)

F&W Custom Wood Homes Media Group (Mr. Bob Rosen)

Home Buyer Publications (Mr. Joe Varda)

ABD Insurance (Ms. Gail Adams, Ms. Sue Kristensen)

Rohm & Haas (Mr. Bob Andrews, Mr. Tom Valleley)

The Longest Lasting Protection

■ *What differentiates a high quality log home finish system from an inexpensive stain?*

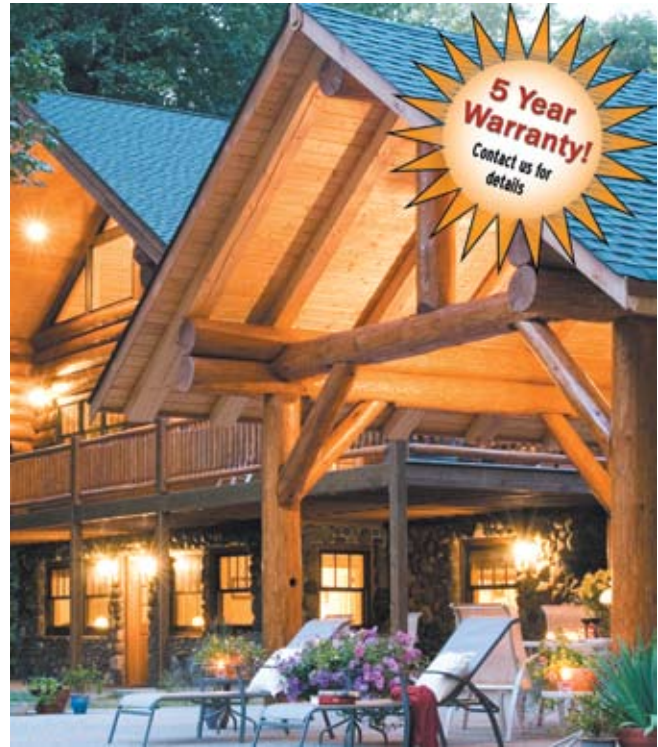
By Vince Palmere

Log homes present a unique set of dynamics to an exterior finish system. As opposed to dimensional lumber, logs experience much more expansion and contraction, typically retain more moisture and on round logs, the upper surfaces weather more rapidly than the lower ones due to increased ultraviolet (UV) light exposure. Low cost, general purpose exterior wood finishes are designed to be applied on well seasoned or kiln dried dimensional lumber and plywood and are unable to cope with parameters presented by log homes.

A quality log home finish must:

- Prevent liquid water from entering the wood.
- Breathe in order to allow water vapor to escape from the wood. This is especially important if the logs are somewhat green or checks have developed that have allowed water entry into the wood.
- Be flexible in order to stretch and contract without cracking.
- Prevent the formation of unsightly mold on the surface.
- Protect the underlying wood from degrading due to ultraviolet (UV) light.
- Withstand temperatures ranging from arctic cold to tropical heat.
- Be durable enough to withstand abrasion from wind, rain, snow, ice, etc.
- Be easy to apply.
- Look beautiful and maintain its appearance for many years.
- Another factor to consider in this day and age is that any and all products should be kind to our environment.

When it comes to stains, one or two coat oil-based stains are at the bottom of the quality ladder. They are cheap to produce and are fairly inexpensive. They are often presented as “penetrating” stains but since they do penetrate into the wood to some extent, they leave the surface without



much protection. That’s why most manufacturers recommend additional coats every year or two. In addition, many oil-based products contain linseed oil, a wonderful food source for mold that turns the surface black over time. They also have low coverage rates, typically 150 to 200 square feet per gallon. They may be cheap but it takes a lot of product to stain a home.

A step up on the ladder are film-forming solvent-based finishes but their quality and cost can range from moderate to high. Like all oil/solvent-based systems, these products are suffering the consequences of Federal and State requirements for lower VOC (volatile organic content) levels and manufacturers are subsequently reducing the solvent content with a corresponding decrease in performance. Some of the better products are no longer allowed to be sold in several states in the northeast and California. The biggest problem with these products is their inability to breathe and it is not unusual to see sheets of finish come off a wall due to water vapor trying to escape from the wood.

(Continued on page 4)

■ *What differentiates a high quality log home finish system from an inexpensive stain?*

(Continued from page 3)

Over the past few years almost all newly developed coating technology has been in water-based systems allowing the formulation of high quality products that meet all of the requirements listed above. Recent advances in polymers, UV light inhibitors and mildewcides have significantly improved the look and performance of water-based coating systems. However, for those manufacturers willing to make the investment this new technology is not cheap and these new systems are costly. The one factor that alleviates the cost per gallon is their ability to be applied at application rates ranging from 350 to 600 square feet per gallon, quite high in comparison to oil-based products. Since water-based stains are film formers, they provide protection where it is needed the most, on the surface of the wood.

In addition to the actual stain, clear topcoats have become an integral part of a quality finish system. Although clear topcoats have been used over log home stains for a number of years, recent advances in polymer technology have led to the development of new topcoat systems like *Lifeline™ Advance Gloss and Satin* that not only appreciably extend the life of the stain but do much, much more. First of all they significantly improve the look of the finish by enhancing its color, clarity and depth. The second thing is their ability to keep the surface extremely clean. *Lifeline Advance* is designed to form a hard breathable film that is much more resistant to dirt pick-up. In addition, the hard smooth surface makes it quite easy to clean off any dust or pollen that may accumulate on the surface of the logs.

Another feature provided by a hard smooth topcoat is greater resistance to mold, mildew and algae growth. In addition to water these organisms need something to grip onto. If the spores land on a hard smooth surface that rapidly sheds water, they won't have an opportunity to germinate and spread. So the surface of the logs stays free of unsightly mold spots and patches of algae.

Of course the best feature of clear topcoats is the protection they provide to the color containing stain. Car coating experts discovered the benefits imparted by clear topcoats many years ago. Today's car finishes remain shiny and last longer than ever thought possible all due to the applica-

tion of a clear topcoat. This same concept and technology went into the formulation of *Lifeline Advance Gloss and Satin* topcoats for log and timber homes. They help prevent the color stain from degrading by protecting the entire finish system from dirt, wind, water and sunlight.

The bottom line is that a low cost, low quality stain may end up costing almost as much as a high quality finish system for the initial application (differences in coverage rate) and will last perhaps a year or two. In addition, once a low quality stain fails the wood will quickly gray and unless the home is thoroughly cleaned, the gray will show through any subsequent coats of stain that are applied.

The cost per gallon of a high quality finish system may be twice that of a low quality product but the higher coverage rate will probably make up most of the difference in total product cost. A high quality system will last at least five years and probably many more depending on environmental conditions. And since high quality finish systems are much more efficient in preventing graying due to UV light, a simple wash-down is typically sufficient to prepare the surface for a maintenance coat of stain and or topcoat.

In addition to actual product cost, one has to also consider the cost of application which is typically three or four times the cost of the product itself. Over a 20 year span, the use of an inexpensive exterior finish can end up costing a homeowner many thousands of dollars more than if he or she had used a quality product in the first place (see next page).



Application of Lifeline Advance clear topcoat over Lifeline Ultra-2 stain

(Continued on page 5)

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Here are some numbers to look at [LQ=low quality, HQ=high quality]

In reality the HQ numbers are quite conservative in that the finish will probably last longer than 5 years before it needs a maintenance coat and the average application rate is at the low end of the scale. Typically the second, third and maintenance coats average between 600 to 800 sq. ft. per gallon.

Typical 2400 sq. ft. home

Two coat, low quality stain @ \$37.50 per gallon.

LQ, initial product cost = \$900 (avg. application rate of 200 sq. ft. per gallon)

LQ, application cost = \$2,700

Every 2 years, one coat

LQ, maintenance coat = \$500

LQ, application cost = \$1,500

Over 20 years

LQ, product cost = \$5,900

LQ, application cost = \$17,700

Total \$23,600

Three coat, high quality finish system. Two coats of stain, one coat of topcoat @ \$72.73 per gallon.

HQ, initial product cost = \$1,200 (avg. application rate of 436 sq. ft. per gallon)

HQ, application cost = \$3,600

Every 5 years, one coat

HQ, maintenance coat = \$500

HQ, application cost = \$1,500

Over 20 years

HQ, product cost = \$3,200

HQ, application cost = \$7,200

Total \$10,400

**Savings over 20 years not counting inflation,
\$13,200**

Lifeline Advance Gloss Revisited

In February we visited the first home that was ever coated with what is now *Lifeline Advance Gloss*. It was stained with *Ultra-1 Chestnut* and coated with our *Gloss* topcoat in October 2003. The first picture was taken on November 19, 2003. When we visited the home on February 7, 2007 the surface was quite dusty and it really needed a good washing but we took this picture anyway. You can see the results for yourself. After three years and three months the finish is absolutely beautiful. This is the best evidence we can show about how our *Lifeline Advance Clear* topcoat works to protect the finish for years.



By the way, the person with the phone is Eddie McDaniels, our Sevierville, TN store manager. Eddie was the one who initially pushed for a topcoat that would give our stains the visual characteristics that he believed would make a log home truly beautiful. All of us at Perma-Chink Systems and thousands of homeowners across the country owe Eddie a debt of gratitude for his outstanding proposal and motivation.

Coming this Spring - New Features at www.permachink.com

Perma-Chink Systems, Inc. will proudly introduce a major expansion of their popular and informative website permachink.com this spring. Visitors will discover the addition of a **Secure Shopping Cart**, a searchable **Knowledgebase**, and expanded **Customer Service** capabilities – all designed to better serve the log home care and maintenance needs of homeowners around the world.

Secure Online Shopping

Perma-Chink Systems, Inc. has made online customers' privacy and security their number one priority. By using state of the art technology and complying with the latest security standards, permachink.com will offer secure, worry-free transactions to online shoppers.

The website will meet all credit card security standards. A leading E-Commerce security company, Control Scan, will verify that customers' private information and credit card numbers are secure.

Self Help Tools

As the *Log Home Care and Maintenance Authority*, Perma-Chink Systems has been providing homeowners with knowledge for over 25 years. Accessing that know-how will be even easier with the introduction of a searchable Knowledgebase at permachink.com.

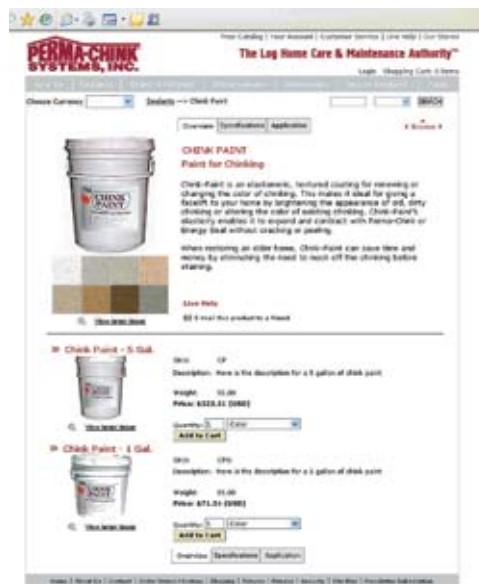
By entering a few key words, visitors will find answers to Frequently Asked Questions and have access to articles about all aspect of log home care and maintenance and the use of Perma-Chink products. Homeowners will find this a valuable resource in protecting their most important asset.

Customer Service

Need help with your project or with placing an online order? Contacting a friendly and knowledgeable Perma-Chink customer service agent will be only a click away.

Visitors to permachink.com will be able to access customer service via **Live Chat** and E-Mail during expanded hours of operation. This capability will certainly enhance Perma-Chink System's reputation as the industry leader in customer service.

Look for these new features and more this spring at www.permachink.com.



The Log Home Care & Maintenance Authority

Company Stores

Washington/Western Division

Redmond, WA 98052
(425) 885-6050
1-800-548-1231

Tennessee/Eastern Division

Knoxville, TN 37914
(865) 524-7343
1-800-548-3554

Sevierville, TN Branch

Sevierville, TN 37862
(865) 774-3307

Minnesota Branch

Rice, MN 56367
(320) 393-3088
1-877-244-6548

Colorado Branch

Rifle, CO 81650
(970) 625-1966
1-800-433-8781

Montana Branch

Stevensville, MT 59870
(406) 642-3544
1-800-479-7090

www.permachink.com

Stocking Distributors

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Central & Eastern Canada
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www.canadianloghomesupply.com

Hess Log Home Supplies,

Pennsylvania
1-800-257-4864
www.hessloghomesupplies.com

Log Home Center,

Indiana
1-800-773-6223
www.loghomecenter.com

Steels Industrial Products, Ltd.,

Western Canada
1-877-846-7502
www.steels.com

Timeless Wood Care Products,

Michigan
1-800-564-2987
www.timelesswoodcare.com

A New Weapon Against Carpenter Bees

■ Eaves and Fascia Traps

By Vince Palmere

Over the past few years we've had a number of newsletter articles about carpenter bees. Come early spring carpenter bees becomes a hot topic around here since we get numerous calls every day from people who are tired of seeing these bees drill into their eaves, fascia boards and logs.

We have learned a number of things about carpenter bees including that they really don't like drilling into surfaces that have been coated with *Lifeline Advance Gloss* clear topcoat. It may be that they see their reflection or they don't like a smooth, slick surface. We've had a number of customers tell us that once they coated their home with *Lifeline Advance Gloss* the amount of carpenter bee damage they experienced diminished considerably. The *Lifeline Advance Satin* topcoat seems to work too but not nearly as well as the *Lifeline Advance Gloss*.

But on to our new weapon; a couple of months ago we got a call from a log home applicator, Earl Windsor, who told us that he had an idea for a carpenter bee trap. Most of the time when you get a call like this it's like encountering a commercial for a weight loss program that says that you can eat as much as you want and you'll still lose weight. It's a great idea but it probably won't work. However when Earl showed us what he had

invented it was immediately apparent that he was on to something. The concept is simple but brilliant. Attract the bees into existing holes and trap them there with an enhanced, long-lasting adhesive. It's one of those ideas where the first thing that comes to mind is "Why didn't I think of that." Sorry but Earl beat you to it and his patent is pending.

The traps come in two forms, one for the eaves and one for fascia. No one expects that they will totally eliminate carpenter bee damage but they should significantly reduce the



number of drilling female carpenter bees in an area. If you figure that each female makes at least two nest chambers and you end up trapping 25 or so bees, that's a lot fewer holes that you'll have to deal with each year.

The one thing we really like about these traps is that they do not include or require the use of any pesticides. If you would like to learn more about these traps, please give us a call.



fascia trap



eaves trap



Spring Check-Up

April showers may bring May flowers, but they can also bring leaky basements, moldy walls and costly cleanup. So when you start your Spring cleaning, don't forget to check the outside of your home to make sure it's protected from wind and water damage.

- Examine fascia or soffit boards.
- Make sure gutters are clean and in good working order.

- Examine window and door frames, flashing and weatherstripping. If the sealants around these openings are no longer pliable, replace them.
- Inspect for any cracking, peeling or blistering of the finish. Check for water repellency by spraying some water on the wood. If the wood turns dark, the finish needs to be renewed.
- Come to one of our **free** Spring workshops to learn everything you need to know about inspecting, cleaning and maintaining your log home. See our workshop schedule on page 8.

If you would like a referral to an experienced contractor to perform an inspection or to help you with your log home project, contact your nearest Perma-Chink Systems, Inc. location.



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Spring 2007

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Issue #1

The Log Home Care and Maintenance Authority

Don't Miss Out FREE

Application Workshops/Seminars

Spring 2007



March 24	Stevensville, Montana
March 24	Sevierville, Tennessee
March 31	Redmond, Washington
March 31	Rice, Minnesota
April 21	Rifle, Colorado
April 28	Fairbanks, Alaska
May 5	Wasilla, Alaska
May 19	Redmond, Washington
May 19-20	Irasburg, Vermont

Free samples of many of our products are available upon request. Call your nearest Perma-Chink Systems store.

WE SPECIALIZE IN ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PRODUCTS!

**Perma-Chink
 Systems
 Free
 Product
 Catalog**



order on line at:

www.permachink.com

Come See Us at these Log Home Shows

Spring 2007

March 23-25	Portland, OR
March 23-25	Columbus, OH
April 13-15	Fredericksburg, VA
April 13-15	Chicago, IL
April 20-22	Milwaukee, WI
April 27-29	Omaha, NE
April 27-29	Valley Forge, PA

Visit our website for more information