

rub a dub dub

Having spent money on a smart new paint job for the house, a regular clean will keep it looking good, for longer.

Imagine if you were left to stand on a street corner, gathering road grime, wind-blown dirt, bird poop and mould on your south side without ever having a shower. You'd soon look pretty nasty.

It's often what we expect of our houses. That paint job may look shiny and robust now, but without regular cleaning it will not only look drab but have a shortened life.

Having your house washed might seem like something you can defer for another year but failure to treat accumulated mould, grime and salt will shorten the life of paint finishes, says Ray Tomlinson of JT Property Wash. He recommends your house is washed at least once a year. "Regular cleaning will extend the life of your exterior paintwork well beyond the standard 10 years, so it's an investment worth it in the long run."

Washing the house doesn't have to cost that much, especially if you're prepared to do it yourself. If you decide on the DIY option, however, don't simply grab a waterblaster and fire away. Waterblasting can eat into the surface and destroy the substrate below. Water can also creep through the windows and doors onto paint finishes and wallpaper.

It's the solutions you use for house washing that do all the work. No matter what type of cladding you have, the cleaning process is exactly the same. The only thing that varies is the strength of the

solution. Resene has a variety of good, cost-effective house wash solutions available for exterior cladding, fences, decks and patios as well as a fast acting mould and mould treatment.

Houses get particularly dirty in areas near high traffic flows. The Resene Paint Prep and Housewash solution is recommended by Ray as it immediately brings the wall surface back to life.

Moss, mould and lichen on any building will make it absorb moisture. On surfaces with moss and mould build up, which is common in our humid climate, Ray suggests the Resene Moss & Mould Killer which kills most common moulds and fungus in 48 hours. He says these are probably the most cost-effective on the market, too.

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Follow the instructions on the product, he says. The correct method is to apply the solution using a back pack garden sprayer. "Hand-scrub all the windows and doors, then leave the solution on to soak in, then give it a gentle wash down. It doesn't need to be a waterblast. It can just be a house brush," says Ray.

If your home is really grubby, it's best to use a professional cleaner as they have access to stronger solutions. JT Property Wash has two commercial-grade products that are exclusively theirs which were specifically developed by Resene for tougher jobs.

Most house washers charge about \$300 to clean the average three-bedroom house from the ground up to the soffits.

Before you commit, Ray says get a referral. "Also find out how long they've been in the business and whether they have a good track record. Be wary of fly-by-nighters, people who think they know what they're doing."

House wash companies will also clean gutters as they have equipment to clean while remaining on the ground. Says Ray: "It's not a good idea to go up a ladder. You've got to be careful when you're working from heights, whether you do it yourself or a contractor is doing it. Getting the cheapest price may not be a good idea if the contractor has a fall. With the new health and safety regulations, the cost of falls can become your responsibility." **H**

words Vicki Holder

top tips

If your timber deck looks like it needs a good clean, use Resene Timber and Deck Wash for a quick and easy job.

Paths, patios and other exterior concrete areas can also be treated with Resene Deep Clean to keep them free from moss, mould, algae and lichen. Simply spray or brush on and leave Resene Deep Clean and nature to do the work. Slow acting Resene Deep Clean gets right down to the roots of the problem, destroying the growth and combining with UV light and rain to weather off the remains.

 Resene Float

