## Clean and Maintenance of Stainless Steel

## Exterior

Like all surfaces, stainless steel requires cleaning to remove dirt and grime to retain pristine condition. The level of cleaning and maintenance depends primarily on the environment. In some exterior instances normal rain washing is sufficient, e.g. roofing, but more polluted or corrosive environments, e.g. coastal situations, the surfaces require regular washing retaining their good looks.

Coastal situations – Discolouration, or tea staining, most commonly occur within 5 kilometres of the coast and become progressively worse closer to the water. Note that in situations right on the seafront, it is recommended that cleaning is performed once a month.

## Interior

Dirt and grease accumulate from many sources. They can usually be removed by routine cleaning using soap, ammonia or detergent and warm water. It should be noted that nearly all abrasive cleaners will scratch bright polished stainless steel surfaces. On other finishes the cleaners should only be used in the direction of the polish.  A clean, dust and grit free cloth should be used to avoid scratching.  In all cases the mildest cleaning procedure that will do the job efficiently should be used, e.g. wash down with warm water and washing up liquid followed by a wash of clean warm water only followed by wiping dry with a clean absorbent cloth. For textured and rigidized finishes, a nylon bristled brush will remove any dirt and grime which may accumulate in the valleys of the textured finish.  
After initial installation, the stainless steel will require thorough cleaning to remove any adhesive – either from the protective coating or other building operations – that may have been left on the surface. If marks such as fingerprints etc are a continuous problem a light surface coating of baby oil, clear silicone wax polish or furniture polish such as Neopol will help prevent recurrence of this problem.

## Precautions

Harsh abrasives should never be used on any polished metal surface. Strong mineral acids such as hydrochloric and sometimes hydrofluoric acid are used to clean masonry, but these should never be permitted to come in contact with stainless steel or any other metal work. If this should happen, the acid solution should be washed off immediately with plenty of water. Pads of ordinary steel wool incorporating soap should be avoided – there is a danger that particles of plain carbon steel from the pads may be left behind after rinsing to give unsightly rust stains.  Never use oil based commercial cleaners on the outside of a building. The residual oil film can result in unwanted iridescent colours on stainless steel which can only be removed by abrasive action.  Most stainless steel installed at the construction site has a PVC protection film on it. This should remain on the steel until the last possible moment to protect the surface of the stainless steel from such problems as chemical and concrete splatters.

## Grades of Euroglass product

The majority of Euroglass products offered are 2205 Duplex Ultra Marine Grade Stainless Steel, 316 Marine Grade Stainless (both 2205 and 316 are applicable to coastal environments) and also 304 (generally for interior applications or in low corrosive environments).