

CALGARY PAINT CONTRACTORS

Paint Maintenance

Paint touch-up, cleaning, longevity tips, and maintenance schedules to protect your Calgary home's painted surfaces from chinook damage, UV fade, and hail.

21 Expert Answers from Paint IQ

calgarypaintcontractors.com/construction-brain

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What's the best way to clean painted baseboards in a Calgary home without removing the finish?

Gentle cleaning with the right products and techniques will keep your Calgary baseboards looking fresh without damaging the paint finish. Use a microfiber cloth dampened with warm water and a few drops of dish soap for regular cleaning, working in small sections and drying immediately to prevent water damage to the paint film.

Calgary's extremely dry winter air (often 15-20% humidity) makes painted surfaces more brittle and susceptible to damage from harsh cleaning products or excessive moisture. The combination of forced-air heating and low humidity also means dust and static buildup on baseboards is more aggressive than in humid climates. This makes regular, gentle cleaning essential to prevent buildup that requires more aggressive methods later.

Start with the mildest approach: a dry microfiber cloth to remove surface dust and pet hair. For deeper cleaning, mix one teaspoon of mild dish soap (like Dawn) in a cup of warm water. Dampen your microfiber cloth with this solution — it should be damp, not wet. Clean in 3-foot sections, working from one end to the other, then immediately follow with a clean, dry cloth to remove any moisture. Never let water sit on painted baseboards, as Calgary's temperature fluctuations can cause the paint to soften and peel.

For stubborn marks, try a **magic eraser (melamine foam)** very gently on satin or semi-gloss finishes — but test in an inconspicuous area first. Magic erasers are mildly abrasive and can dull flat or eggshell paint finishes. For scuff marks from shoes or furniture, a pencil eraser often works better and is much gentler on the paint. Crayon marks respond well to a hair dryer (to soften the wax) followed by gentle removal with a plastic scraper and then soap cleaning.

Avoid these common mistakes: Never use bleach, ammonia, or abrasive cleaners on painted surfaces. Don't use paper towels, which can scratch the paint finish. Avoid excessive water or letting cleaning solutions sit on the paint. Skip the Swiffer wet pads — they're too harsh for painted surfaces and can leave streaks on semi-gloss finishes.

For homes with pets, Calgary's dry air means pet dander and hair stick more aggressively to painted surfaces. A slightly damp microfiber cloth followed by a dryer sheet can help reduce static and prevent immediate re-accumulation of pet hair on baseboards.

If your baseboards are painted with **flat or matte paint** (common in older Calgary homes), they're much more delicate. Use only the dry microfiber method or very light dampening with plain water. Flat paint cannot handle soap solutions without showing water marks or dulling.

Professional cleaning becomes necessary when regular maintenance has been neglected and baseboards have heavy buildup, when dealing with smoke damage or cooking grease transfer, or when the paint finish has become chalky or degraded. At that point, cleaning may remove more paint than dirt, and repainting becomes the better option. Most Calgary painting contractors charge \$2-4 per linear foot to clean, prep, and repaint baseboards as part of a room refresh.

If you're planning a larger painting project and need help finding qualified contractors in Calgary, the Calgary Construction Network directory can help you compare local painting professionals and read reviews from other homeowners.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Canadian Closet
- Premium Built Structures
- BOND CONTRACTING & CONSTRUCTION INC
- Alpine Exteriors siding and roofing
- New Earth Waste Services Ltd

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Q2

How often should I touch up high-traffic painted areas like baseboards and door frames in Calgary?

High-traffic painted areas in Calgary typically need touch-ups every 12-18 months, with baseboards and door frames showing wear faster due to the city's dry climate and frequent temperature swings from chinook winds. The low humidity levels cause paint films to become more brittle over time, making them more susceptible to chips and scuffs from daily contact.

Calgary's unique climate accelerates wear patterns in several ways. The extreme dryness, especially during winter months when indoor humidity drops to 15-20%, causes latex paint to lose flexibility faster than in more humid climates. This makes high-contact areas like door frames, baseboards, and stair railings more prone to chipping when bumped by furniture, vacuum cleaners, or foot traffic. Additionally, the frequent temperature cycling from chinook winds causes painted trim to expand and contract repeatedly, gradually weakening the paint film's

adhesion at stress points.

The type of paint finish significantly affects touch-up frequency. **Semi-gloss and satin finishes on trim last longer** than eggshell or flat paints because they're more durable and washable. However, they also show scuffs and dirt more readily, requiring more frequent cleaning. Baseboards painted with flat paint may hide scuffs better initially but will need complete repainting sooner because they can't be properly cleaned. For Calgary homes, semi-gloss latex paint on all trim provides the best balance of durability and cleanability.

Inspect high-traffic areas quarterly and address chips immediately before they expand. Small chips allow moisture to penetrate behind the paint film, especially problematic during Calgary's wet spring months. Keep leftover paint properly stored for touch-ups – latex paint stored in a cool, dry location can remain usable for 2-3 years. Before touching up, clean the area with mild detergent, lightly sand any rough edges, and apply primer to bare spots before the finish coat.

Prevention extends touch-up intervals significantly. Install door stops to prevent handles from hitting walls, use furniture pads to protect baseboards, and consider chair rails in dining areas. Regular cleaning with appropriate products (mild soap for semi-gloss, dry dusting for flat finishes) removes dirt before it becomes embedded in the paint film.

When Professional Help Makes Sense

Consider hiring a professional painter when touch-ups no longer blend properly with existing paint, when multiple rooms need attention simultaneously, or when the original paint has faded significantly due to Calgary's intense UV exposure. Professional painters can better match aged paint colors and have the spray equipment to achieve seamless touch-ups on larger areas. They also carry proper insurance for any damage during the work.

If you're dealing with extensive touch-up needs across multiple rooms, browsing painting contractors through the Calgary Construction Network directory can help you compare local professionals who understand Calgary's specific climate challenges and paint performance requirements.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Wise Abatement
- WestAim Construction Ltd.
- Venkor Group Inc
- Turnbull masonry

- Onsite Contracting and Electrical Services

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Q3

How do I deal with paint that keeps flaking off my concrete foundation walls in Calgary?

Paint flaking off concrete foundation walls is almost always caused by moisture penetration from behind the wall, not paint failure itself. In Calgary's climate, this typically happens when exterior moisture finds its way through foundation cracks or inadequate waterproofing, then tries to escape through the interior paint film. The paint acts like a vapor barrier, trapping moisture until it builds enough pressure to push the paint off the concrete.

The root cause is usually exterior water infiltration around your foundation. Calgary's freeze-thaw cycles create hairline cracks in concrete foundations, and our intense summer storms can drive water into these cracks. When that moisture tries to dry inward (especially during heating season), it gets trapped behind the paint and causes the flaking you're seeing. Simply repainting over the problem will result in the same flaking within months.

Start by addressing moisture sources outside your foundation. Check that your lot grades away from the house — water should flow away from the foundation, not toward it. Clean gutters and ensure downspouts direct water at least six feet from the foundation. Look for cracks in the concrete foundation walls from outside and seal them with a quality concrete crack filler like Sikaflex or similar polyurethane-based product available at Calgary Home Depot locations.

For the interior walls, you need to remove all loose, flaking paint completely. Use a wire brush, scraper, or pressure washer if you have good drainage in your basement. Let the concrete dry thoroughly — this may take several weeks in Calgary's dry climate. Test for moisture by taping plastic sheets to different areas of the wall and checking for condensation after 24 hours. If you see moisture, the exterior water infiltration problem isn't solved yet.

Once the concrete is completely dry, use a concrete sealer before painting. Products like Drylok or similar masonry waterproofing paint create a barrier that can handle some moisture movement while providing a paintable surface. These products are specifically designed for basement and foundation applications and available at Sherwin-Williams and Benjamin Moore dealers throughout Calgary. Apply according to manufacturer instructions — usually two coats with proper cure time between applications.

For severe moisture problems, consider hiring a waterproofing contractor before attempting to paint. Foundation moisture issues in Calgary often require exterior excavation and proper waterproof membrane installation — not a

DIY project. If you're seeing efflorescence (white mineral deposits) along with paint flaking, or if multiple areas of your basement show moisture signs, professional waterproofing assessment is worth the investment to protect your home's structural integrity.

If you need help finding waterproofing or painting contractors experienced with Calgary foundation issues, the Calgary Construction Network directory includes professionals who understand our unique climate challenges and can provide proper moisture remediation before refinishing your basement walls.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- New Earth Waste Services Ltd
- BOND CONTRACTING & CONSTRUCTION INC
- G.D.K Drywall LTD.
- Image Line Painting
- Alpine Exteriors siding and roofing

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What should I do about chalking exterior paint on my Calgary stucco before it gets worse?

Stop the chalking immediately by power washing the loose chalk and applying a high-quality bonding primer before repainting. Chalking on Calgary stucco is accelerated by our intense UV radiation and chinook temperature cycling, and it will continue degrading until the underlying stucco is exposed if left untreated.

Chalking occurs when paint binders break down from UV exposure, leaving loose pigment particles on the surface that rub off like chalk dust. On Calgary stucco, this process happens faster than in most climates because our elevation puts us under some of the most intense UV radiation in Canada — roughly 20-25% stronger than at sea level. South-facing and west-facing walls take the worst beating, often showing significant chalking within 3-4 years even with quality paint.

Surface Preparation is Critical

Start by power washing the entire stucco surface to remove all loose chalk. Use a pressure washer set to 1,500-2,000 PSI with a 25-degree tip, working from top to bottom. The water should run clear when you're finished — if it's still milky or colored, keep washing. Allow the stucco to dry completely for 48-72 hours before proceeding. Calgary's dry climate helps here, but don't rush this step.

After washing, test the remaining paint adhesion by pressing duct tape firmly against the surface and pulling it off quickly. If paint comes off with the tape, you'll need to scrape those areas down to sound paint or bare stucco. On heavily chalked stucco, this often means removing most of the existing paint.

Primer Selection Makes the Difference

Apply a high-quality bonding primer specifically designed for chalky surfaces. **Sherwin-Williams PrepRite ProBlock** or **Benjamin Moore Fresh Start** are excellent choices available at Calgary paint stores. These primers penetrate into the chalky surface and create a stable base for your topcoat. Never skip primer on chalky stucco — regular paint applied directly over chalk will fail within a year.

For Calgary stucco, consider an elastomeric primer if you have hairline cracks. Products like **Sherwin-Williams Loxon Primer** stretch with thermal movement from chinooks and help bridge minor stucco cracks that develop over time.

Topcoat Selection for Calgary Conditions

Choose a premium 100% acrylic latex paint with excellent UV resistance. **Benjamin Moore Aura Exterior** and **Sherwin-Williams Duration** are formulated to handle extreme temperature cycling and intense UV. Expect to pay

\$65-80 per gallon, but this investment pays off in Calgary's harsh conditions. Cheaper paints will chalk again within 2-3 years.

Apply two full coats for maximum protection. The first coat seals any remaining porosity in the stucco, while the second provides the UV barrier and color stability you need.

When to Call a Professional

Consider hiring a professional painter if your home is two stories or higher, if more than 50% of the paint needs scraping, or if you discover any cracks in the stucco that need caulking or repair. Professional painters have the equipment to power wash safely at height and can identify stucco issues that need addressing before painting.

If you're looking for a painting contractor in Calgary, the Calgary Construction Network directory can help you compare local professionals who understand stucco preparation and Calgary's challenging climate conditions.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- UR COWRY CABINETS
- Allure Residential & Commercial inc
- Supreme Painting
- Mayken Hazmat Solutions LTD
- BOND CONTRACTING & CONSTRUCTION INC

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Q5

Should I repaint my Calgary home's south side more often than the north side due to sun exposure?

Yes, you should absolutely repaint your Calgary home's south side more frequently than the north side.

South-facing walls in Calgary typically need repainting every 5-7 years, while north-facing surfaces can often go 8-12 years between paint jobs due to dramatically different UV exposure and weather conditions.

Calgary's elevation at 1,045 metres above sea level creates UV radiation that's 20-25% more intense than cities at sea level like Toronto or Vancouver. Your south-facing wall bears the brunt of this intense UV bombardment for 8-

10 hours daily during summer months, causing paint pigments to break down and fade significantly faster. The combination of intense UV and Calgary's famous chinook winds creates a perfect storm for paint degradation on south exposures. Chinooks can swing temperatures 20-30 degrees in hours, causing the paint film to expand and contract rapidly while it's already weakened by UV damage.

West-facing walls face similar challenges and should be repainted on the same schedule as south-facing surfaces. These walls get the afternoon sun when UV intensity peaks and temperatures are highest. North-facing walls, by contrast, receive minimal direct sunlight and are naturally protected from chinook temperature swings, allowing quality paint to last nearly twice as long.

When planning your repainting schedule, inspect south and west walls annually in early spring for signs of fading, chalking, or paint film breakdown. Look for colour shifts compared to protected areas under eaves, and run your hand along the surface - if chalky residue comes off, the paint is breaking down. North walls can be inspected every 2-3 years unless you notice specific issues like moisture damage or mechanical damage from hail.

Choose premium exterior paints with superior UV resistance for south and west exposures. Benjamin Moore Aura, Sherwin-Williams Duration, and Dulux Ultra all offer enhanced fade resistance that's worth the extra cost on sun-exposed walls. These paints use advanced resin technology and UV-stable pigments that maintain colour integrity longer in Calgary's harsh conditions. For north walls, you can use standard premium exterior latex and still achieve excellent longevity.

Consider using slightly different colour strategies for different exposures. Darker colours fade more noticeably on south walls, so many Calgary homeowners choose lighter shades for maximum sun exposure while using richer colours on protected north sides. Earth tones and greys tend to hold their colour better than bright blues, reds, or greens under intense UV.

Professional painters in Calgary often recommend a staggered maintenance approach: repaint south and west walls every 6 years, then tackle north and east walls 2-3 years later. This spreads the cost over time while ensuring your home always looks well-maintained. The investment in more frequent south-side repainting actually saves money long-term by preventing substrate damage that requires extensive prep work.

Hire a professional for multi-storey south wall repainting due to safety concerns with ladders and scaffolding, plus their ability to properly assess and prep sun-damaged surfaces. For single-storey sections, experienced DIYers can handle the work but should budget extra time for thorough surface preparation on UV-damaged paint.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Mayken Hazmat Solutions LTD
- Supreme Painting
- Premium Built Structures
- Johnny B's Painting
- Calgary Garage Builders Ltd

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Q6

Should I apply a clear coat over exterior paint for extra protection in Calgary's climate?

No, you should not apply a clear coat over exterior paint in Calgary. Clear coats over exterior paint typically fail within 1-2 years in Calgary's extreme climate and can actually make maintenance more difficult and expensive.

Clear topcoats face several critical problems in Calgary's conditions. The intense UV radiation at our elevation breaks down clear coatings faster than pigmented paint, causing them to yellow, chalk, and peel. When a clear coat fails, it often peels in sheets, taking the underlying paint with it. Chinook temperature swings cause different expansion rates between the paint and clear coat layers, leading to adhesion failure and cracking. Calgary's low humidity also makes clear coats more brittle than in humid climates.

The bigger issue is maintenance complexity. When clear-coated paint needs refreshing, you cannot simply clean and repaint like normal exterior paint. The failed clear coat must be completely removed through sanding or chemical stripping before new paint can be applied. This turns a straightforward repaint into an expensive restoration project. Many Calgary homeowners have discovered this costly reality after trying to save money on a "simple" repaint over failed clear coat.

Instead of clear coats, invest in premium exterior paint formulated for extreme climates. Products like **Benjamin Moore Aura Exterior**, **Sherwin-Williams Duration**, or **Dulux Ultra Hide** contain advanced UV blockers and flexible resins that provide excellent protection without the complications of clear topcoats. These paints cost \$60-80 per gallon but deliver 6-8 years of protection on Calgary's challenging south and west-facing exposures.

For maximum protection on particularly exposed areas, consider **elastomeric paint** for stucco surfaces or **ceramic-additive paints** that reflect more heat and UV. Some Calgary painters also recommend tinted primer systems that provide an extra barrier layer while maintaining the simplicity of a standard paint system.

Focus your protection efforts on proper surface preparation and quality paint selection. Clean and prime all chalky or weathered surfaces, caulk gaps where moisture can penetrate, and choose colours in the light-to-medium range since dark colours absorb more heat and fade faster in Calgary's intense sun. A properly applied premium paint system will outperform clear-coated budget paint every time.

The only exterior clear coats that work reliably in Calgary are **marine-grade spar varnishes** on natural wood features like entry doors or decorative trim, and even these require annual maintenance. For general exterior painted surfaces, stick with high-quality paint as your primary and final protection.

If you're planning an exterior repaint and want to ensure maximum durability in Calgary's climate, consider consulting with painting professionals who understand our unique conditions. The Calgary Construction Network directory includes experienced exterior painters who can recommend the best paint systems for your specific exposure and substrate.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Allure Residential & Commercial inc
- Paysons Painting
- Hebron Painting
- Bracha Concrete & Coatings Inc.
- Amar Homes Inc

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What's the best way to clean scuff marks off painted walls without damaging the finish?

Start with the gentlest cleaning method first: a clean, damp microfiber cloth with just water. Most scuff marks on painted walls will come off with gentle circular motions using only water, especially if the paint finish is eggshell, satin, or semi-gloss. Flat paint finishes are more delicate and require extra care to avoid burnishing (creating shiny spots where you scrub).

For stubborn scuff marks that don't respond to water alone, make a mild cleaning solution using a few drops of dish soap in warm water. Dawn or similar grease-cutting dish soaps work well without being too harsh on paint. Apply the solution with a soft cloth or sponge, work in gentle circles, then immediately wipe clean with a damp cloth to remove any soap residue. **Never let cleaning solutions sit on painted walls** — they can penetrate the paint film and cause discoloration or softening.

Magic erasers (melamine foam) are highly effective but use them sparingly. These work like very fine sandpaper and will remove scuff marks, but they also remove a microscopic layer of paint. Test in an inconspicuous area first, use very light pressure, and limit to small areas. Magic erasers work particularly well on semi-gloss and satin finishes but can damage flat paint irreparably.

In Calgary's dry climate, painted walls can become more brittle over time, especially during winter months when indoor humidity drops below 30%. This makes aggressive scrubbing more likely to damage the paint finish. If you're dealing with multiple scuff marks throughout your home, consider running a humidifier during winter months — it helps preserve paint flexibility and makes cleaning easier.

For crayon marks, try a hair dryer to warm the wax, then gently scrape with a plastic card before cleaning with soap and water. For permanent marker, rubbing alcohol on a cotton swab often works, but test first as alcohol can dissolve some paint finishes. Avoid abrasive cleaners, bleach-based products, or anything containing ammonia — these can permanently damage paint and void manufacturer warranties.

When Professional Help Makes Sense

If scuff marks won't come off with gentle cleaning, or if cleaning reveals underlying paint damage, it's time for touch-up painting. Professional painters can color-match existing paint and blend touch-ups seamlessly — something that's particularly challenging with older paint that has faded or with complex custom colors. For homes with extensive scuff damage throughout, a professional repaint might be more cost-effective than spending hours on individual touch-ups.

The key is always starting gentle and escalating gradually — you can always try a stronger method, but you can't undo damage from being too aggressive initially. Most scuff marks in Calgary homes come off easily with just water and patience, preserving your paint finish for years to come.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Paysons Painting
- G.D.K Drywall LTD.
- Makki Abatement
- Canadian Closet
- UR COWRY CABINETS

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Q8

How do I fix bubbling paint on my Calgary bathroom ceiling from shower steam?

Bubbling paint on bathroom ceilings is caused by moisture penetrating through inadequate primer or paint that can't handle Calgary's extreme humidity swings. You'll need to scrape off the bubbled areas, address the moisture source, prime with a vapor-barrier primer, and repaint with bathroom-specific paint.

The root cause is almost always inadequate surface preparation or wrong paint choice for Calgary's unique conditions. Calgary's winter indoor humidity drops to 15-20%, then spikes to 80-90% during hot showers — this extreme cycling causes standard latex paint to lose adhesion and bubble. Many Calgary homes also have older exhaust fans that don't move enough air, compounding the problem.

Start by scraping off all loose, bubbling paint with a putty knife. Sand the edges smooth where good paint meets bare drywall. If you find any soft, crumbly drywall underneath, that section needs to be cut out and patched — moisture has compromised the paper facing. Clean the entire ceiling with TSP (trisodium phosphate) solution to remove soap residue and mildew, which are common in Calgary bathrooms due to our hard water.

The key is using the right primer. Apply a high-quality vapor-barrier primer like **Zinsser Cover Stain** or **Benjamin Moore Fresh Start** — these create a moisture seal that prevents steam from reaching the drywall. Standard drywall primer won't work in this application. In Calgary's dry climate, you may need to thin the primer

slightly or use a paint conditioner like **Floetrol** to prevent lap marks during application.

For the finish coat, use a bathroom-specific paint with mildew resistance. **Benjamin Moore Aura Bath & Spa**, **Sherwin-Williams ProClassic Interior Waterbased Acrylic-Alkyd**, or **Dulux Ultra Hide** all perform well in Calgary bathrooms. Choose satin or semi-gloss finish — flat paint absorbs moisture and will bubble again. Apply two coats, allowing full cure time between coats (4-6 hours in Calgary's dry air).

Address the ventilation issue or the problem will return. Calgary building code requires bathroom exhaust fans rated for the room size (typically 50-80 CFM for standard bathrooms). Run the fan during showers and for 30 minutes after. If your fan is over 10 years old or very loud, replacement fans from Home Depot or Rona typically cost \$80-200 and significantly improve moisture removal.

Hire a professional painter if you find extensive soft drywall that needs replacement, if the bubbling covers more than 25% of the ceiling, or if you discover mold growth behind the paint. Professional bathroom ceiling repaints in Calgary typically cost \$300-600 depending on prep work needed. The Calgary Construction Network directory includes painters experienced with moisture-related paint failures who can assess whether you need drywall repair before repainting.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- UR COWRY CABINETS
- Royland Stucco
- Mike's Restoration Service
- Greenstone landscaping solutions
- Canadian Closet

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Q9

What's the best way to touch up exterior paint chips caused by gravel and debris in Calgary?

Touch up exterior paint chips immediately — Calgary's intense UV and chinook temperature swings will cause small chips to expand into major paint failure within one season if left unaddressed. The key is proper surface

preparation and using paint that matches both the color and sheen of your existing finish.

Start by cleaning the chipped area with a wire brush or scraper to remove any loose paint flakes and debris. Calgary's dry climate often leaves paint edges brittle around chips, so scrape back to solid, well-adhered paint even if this means enlarging the repair area slightly. Sand the edges smooth with 120-grit sandpaper to create a gradual transition — this prevents the "halo effect" where touch-ups are visible due to thickness differences. Clean the area with a damp cloth and let it dry completely.

Prime any bare substrate before applying finish paint. If the chip goes down to bare wood or metal, use a high-quality oil-based or shellac primer like Zinsser Bulls Eye 1-2-3 or Benjamin Moore Fresh Start. These primers seal the substrate and prevent tannin bleeding, which is common in Calgary's cedar and pine siding. For chips that only go through the paint film, you can often skip primer if you're touching up within six months of the original paint job.

The biggest challenge in Calgary touch-ups is color matching. Our intense UV radiation causes exterior paint to fade significantly faster than in other climates — especially on south and west-facing walls. Paint that looks like a perfect match in the can often appears noticeably different on a faded wall. Take a sample of your existing paint (scrape off a quarter-sized piece from an inconspicuous area) to a paint store for computer color matching. Sherwin-Williams and Benjamin Moore dealers in Calgary have excellent color-matching technology.

Apply thin coats with a small brush rather than trying to fill the chip with one thick application. Use a high-quality angled brush (1-2 inches) and feather the edges into the surrounding paint. In Calgary's low humidity, paint can skin over quickly while remaining wet underneath, so work efficiently and avoid overworking the touch-up. For best results, apply touch-ups during moderate temperatures (15-25°C) and avoid direct sunlight.

Alberta's extreme weather makes touch-up durability critical. Use the same quality of paint as your original finish — cheap touch-up paint will fail within months when exposed to chinook temperature cycling. If your home was painted with premium acrylic latex, use the same brand and product line for touch-ups. The flexibility and UV resistance of quality paints like Benjamin Moore Aura or Sherwin-Williams Duration are essential for Calgary exteriors.

For extensive chip damage (common after hailstorms), consider repainting the entire affected wall section rather than numerous individual touch-ups. Multiple small repairs often create a "polka dot" appearance that's more noticeable than a uniform repaint. This is especially true on textured stucco surfaces where individual touch-ups are difficult to blend seamlessly.

Hire a professional painter for touch-ups on two-storey homes requiring ladder work, extensive hail damage covering multiple walls, or when color matching proves difficult. Professional painters have spray equipment for better texture matching on stucco and access to contractor-grade touch-up products that aren't available to consumers. They can also assess whether underlying issues (loose siding, caulking failure) contributed to the paint

damage.

If you're dealing with recurring chip damage in high-traffic areas like walkways or driveways, consider upgrading to an elastomeric coating on your next full repaint — these flexible coatings better resist impact damage and thermal cycling.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Premium Built Structures
- Ardco Construction
- Mayken Hazmat Solutions LTD
- Makki Abatement
- Supreme Painting

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How often should I wash my Calgary home's painted exterior to keep it looking good?

Wash your Calgary home's exterior every 12-18 months to maintain paint appearance and longevity.

Calgary's unique climate conditions — including chinook winds that blow dust and debris, frequent hailstorms, and intense UV exposure — create more dirt accumulation and faster paint degradation than in milder climates.

Calgary's dry climate and frequent wind events deposit significant amounts of prairie dust, pollen, and airborne particles on exterior surfaces. The chinook winds are particularly problematic, as they can carry dust and debris from hundreds of kilometres away, leaving a fine coating on painted surfaces that gradually builds up and makes colours appear dull and faded. South-facing and west-facing walls, which already bear the brunt of Calgary's intense UV radiation, accumulate the most dirt and require the most frequent cleaning.

The timing of exterior washing matters significantly in Calgary. **Late spring (May) and early fall (September) are ideal washing times.** Spring cleaning removes winter salt residue, accumulated grime, and prepares surfaces for the harsh summer UV season. Fall cleaning removes summer dust, pollen, and any residue from construction activity in your neighbourhood. Avoid washing during chinook events or when temperatures are below 5°C, as rapid temperature changes can stress wet painted surfaces.

Use a soft-bristle brush or low-pressure washing (under 1,500 PSI) with a mild detergent solution — one part household detergent to ten parts water works well. Calgary's painted surfaces, especially those exposed to chinook cycling, can be more brittle than paint in stable climates. High-pressure washing can force water behind loose paint edges or damage paint that has become chalky from UV exposure. Start from the bottom and work up to prevent streaking, then rinse thoroughly from top to bottom.

Pay special attention to areas under eaves and overhangs where Calgary's low humidity can cause paint to become particularly chalky. If you notice significant chalking (white powder coming off on your hand when you touch the surface), this indicates UV damage and suggests the paint may need refreshing within 1-2 years. **Hail damage inspection should be part of every exterior washing** — look for chips, dings, or exposed substrate that needs immediate touch-up to prevent moisture penetration.

For homes in Calgary's newer subdivisions like Mahogany, Cranston, or Auburn Bay, where construction dust is common, you may need to wash twice yearly. Heritage homes in established neighbourhoods like Mount Pleasant or Hillhurst typically need annual washing unless they're near high-traffic areas like Kensington Road or Memorial Drive.

Consider hiring a professional exterior cleaning service for multi-storey homes or when dealing with delicate heritage paint finishes. Professional cleaners have the proper equipment to safely clean high areas and experience working with Calgary's climate-stressed paint surfaces. They can also identify potential paint problems during cleaning that homeowners might miss.

If you're planning exterior painting in the next year or two, regular washing actually extends your current paint's life and makes the eventual repainting process easier and less expensive by keeping the substrate in better condition.

For help finding exterior cleaning services or painting contractors in Calgary, you can browse options in the Calgary Construction Network directory at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Jk Stucco
- Paysons Painting
- Besademolition
- Wise Abatement
- Venkor Group Inc

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Q11

What causes yellow stains to bleed through white interior paint in Calgary homes?

Yellow stains bleeding through white paint are typically caused by **water-soluble extractives** from wood substrates, **nicotine and smoke residue**, or **water damage** that has activated tannins and other organic compounds in the underlying materials. In Calgary's extremely dry climate, these stains often become more concentrated and stubborn because moisture evaporates quickly, leaving behind concentrated deposits that readily dissolve and migrate through new paint films.

The most common culprit in Calgary homes is **tannin bleed** from wood trim, doors, and cabinetry. Woods like cedar, redwood, oak, and even pine contain water-soluble tannins that can migrate through latex paint, especially when the wood gets wet or when humidity changes rapidly during chinook weather events. Calgary's extreme

temperature swings cause wood to expand and contract, potentially opening microscopic pathways for these extractives to reach the surface. **Nicotine staining** is another frequent cause, particularly in older Calgary homes where smoking occurred indoors. The tar and nicotine create a yellowish-brown film that bleeds through multiple coats of regular paint.

Water damage creates the most persistent yellow staining problems. When drywall, wood, or insulation gets wet from roof leaks, plumbing issues, or ice dam problems common in Calgary winters, organic compounds break down and create yellow, brown, or rust-colored stains. These water-activated stains will continue bleeding through standard paint indefinitely until properly sealed. Even after the moisture source is fixed, the staining compounds remain in the substrate.

Alberta's building practices contribute to some staining issues. Many Calgary homes built in the 1970s and 1980s used particleboard or MDF trim that contains formaldehyde-based adhesives. When these materials get damp or are painted with water-based paint, the adhesives can break down and cause yellow staining. Similarly, some older drywall compounds and joint tapes can cause discoloration when activated by moisture or certain paint formulations.

The solution requires proper **stain-blocking primer** before applying your finish paint. **Shellac-based primers** like Zinsser BIN or Kilz Original are the gold standard for blocking yellow stains — they create an alcohol-based barrier that prevents water-soluble stains from migrating through. For less severe staining, **oil-based stain-blocking primers** work well and are easier to apply than shellac. Standard latex primers will not stop yellow bleed-through and often make the problem worse by adding moisture to the substrate.

For nicotine staining, clean the surface first with **TSP (trisodium phosphate)** or a degreasing cleaner, then apply two coats of shellac primer before your finish paint. Water damage stains require confirming the moisture source is completely eliminated, then using shellac primer over the entire affected area plus six inches beyond the visible stain.

Professional painters should handle extensive stain-blocking work, especially when dealing with smoke damage, water damage covering large areas, or situations where the stain source is unclear. The primer application technique matters significantly — shellac primers dry quickly in Calgary's low humidity and require skill to avoid lap marks and brush strokes. For small areas like individual trim pieces or minor water stains, homeowners can successfully use spray-can stain blockers, but large areas benefit from professional spray application for even coverage.

If you're dealing with persistent staining issues and need professional help, you can browse painting contractors experienced with stain-blocking work through the Calgary Construction Network directory at calgaryconstructionnetwork.com.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Calgary Garage Builders Ltd
- Besademolition
- Earl's Paintworks
- Greenstone landscaping solutions
- Element Painting Inc.

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Q12

What causes paint to blister on south-facing walls in Calgary and how do I prevent it?

Paint blistering on south-facing walls in Calgary is primarily caused by **moisture vapor pressure** combined with the intense UV radiation and extreme temperature cycling from chinook winds. When moisture gets trapped beneath the paint film and the surface heats up rapidly during sunny winter days or chinook events, the moisture expands and pushes the paint away from the substrate, creating those characteristic bubble-like blisters.

Calgary's south-facing walls experience the perfect storm of conditions for paint blistering. The intense UV radiation at our elevation (25% stronger than sea level) heats painted surfaces to extreme temperatures — often 60-70°C on summer afternoons and during winter chinooks. Meanwhile, moisture infiltrates through small cracks, failed caulking, or vapor transmission through the substrate. When that trapped moisture heats up, it expands rapidly and literally blows the paint film off the wall. This is especially problematic on **stucco homes** where moisture can wick through hairline cracks, and on **wood siding** where seasonal movement creates gaps for water entry.

The second major factor is **substrate preparation failure**. Calgary's dry climate makes old paint extremely chalky and brittle. If new paint is applied over poorly-adhered old paint without proper scraping and priming, the weak bond becomes the failure point when thermal stress occurs. Many Calgary homeowners see blistering within the first year after repainting because the preparation work wasn't thorough enough for our extreme conditions.

Prevention Strategies for Calgary Conditions

Start with **moisture elimination** — this is absolutely critical. Inspect and re-caulk all joints, window trim, and penetrations annually. On stucco walls, seal any hairline cracks with quality acrylic caulk. Ensure gutters and downspouts direct water away from walls, and check that sprinkler systems aren't hitting painted surfaces. For wood siding, maintain proper clearance from soil and vegetation.

Choose the right paint system for Calgary's south-facing exposure. Use **100% acrylic latex paint** with high solids content and UV-resistant pigments. Products like **Benjamin Moore Aura** or **Sherwin-Williams Duration** are formulated to handle extreme temperature cycling. Always use a high-quality bonding primer — **Benjamin Moore Fresh Start** or **Sherwin-Williams ProBlock** — over any previously painted surface. On bare wood, use an oil-based primer to seal the grain completely.

Surface preparation cannot be compromised on south-facing walls in Calgary. Scrape all loose and chalky paint, sand glossy surfaces for adhesion, and power wash to remove all chalk residue. Allow surfaces to dry completely — at least 24-48 hours after washing in Calgary's dry climate. Many professionals use a **chalk test** (wiping with a dark cloth) to ensure all loose material is removed.

Apply paint during optimal conditions: temperatures between 15-25°C, low wind, and avoid painting surfaces in direct sunlight when possible. In Calgary, this often means starting early morning on south walls or working in late afternoon. Use paint conditioners like **Floetrol** to improve flow and reduce lap marks in our low humidity.

For severe blistering problems, consider **elastomeric coating** systems designed for stucco, or upgrade to **ceramic-additive paints** that offer superior thermal resistance. These premium products cost \$70-90 per gallon but provide significantly better performance on Calgary's challenging south-facing exposures.

Professional painters have the experience to properly diagnose moisture sources and apply the multi-step preparation process that south-facing walls require in Calgary's climate. If you're seeing recurring blistering issues, the Calgary Construction Network directory can help you find experienced local contractors who understand these specific challenges.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- New Earth Waste Services Ltd
- Radon Lab
- Mayken Hazmat Solutions LTD
- Mr & Mrs Paintastic Inc
- The Original Workshop

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How do I maintain freshly painted exterior walls through Calgary's harsh winters?

Freshly painted exterior walls in Calgary require minimal active maintenance during winter months, but proper preparation before winter arrives and careful monitoring throughout the season will protect your investment and extend the paint's lifespan.

Calgary's winter conditions — chinook temperature swings, intense UV reflection off snow, and freeze-thaw cycles — can stress even premium exterior paint. The key is completing your exterior painting project by mid-September and following a specific winter maintenance routine. Quality 100% acrylic latex paint from Benjamin Moore, Sherwin-Williams, or Dulux needs at least 30 days to fully cure before facing Calgary's first hard freeze, which typically occurs in October.

Before winter sets in, conduct a thorough inspection of your freshly painted surfaces. Look for any areas where caulking around windows, doors, and trim joints may have shrunk or cracked during the initial curing period. Calgary's dry autumn air can cause latex caulk to shrink more than in humid climates. Touch up any gaps with paintable acrylic caulk — moisture infiltration during winter freeze-thaw cycles will cause paint failure by spring. Pay special attention to south and west-facing walls that will bear the brunt of chinook temperature swings.

Clean your gutters and downspouts thoroughly before the first snowfall. Ice dams and overflowing gutters are common in Calgary due to our variable winter temperatures, and water running down freshly painted walls will cause staining and potential adhesion problems. Ensure proper drainage away from your foundation — standing water or ice against painted surfaces creates conditions for paint failure when spring arrives.

Winter Monitoring and Care

During winter months, your primary maintenance task is monitoring, not active intervention. After each major chinook event — when temperatures swing 20-30 degrees in a matter of hours — visually inspect your exterior walls for any new cracks or areas where paint may have pulled away from the substrate. These thermal shock events are most damaging to paint in the first year before it has fully hardened.

Remove snow and ice buildup against painted surfaces when possible, particularly around the foundation and lower siding. Calgary's frequent freeze-thaw cycles can drive moisture into any small cracks or imperfections in the paint film. Use a plastic shovel or brush — never metal tools that could scratch the fresh paint surface.

Watch for ice dam formation along your roofline. Calgary homes commonly develop ice dams due to our variable winter temperatures and heavy snow loads. Water backing up behind ice dams can run down walls and cause staining or paint adhesion problems. Address ice dams promptly through proper attic ventilation or professional

removal.

Avoid pressure washing or aggressive cleaning during winter months. Fresh paint needs time to fully cure and harden, and Calgary's winter conditions already stress the paint film enough without adding mechanical cleaning stress. Save any cleaning for late spring when temperatures consistently stay above 15 degrees Celsius.

For major exterior painting projects or if you notice any concerning paint issues during winter, consider consulting with painting professionals through the Calgary Construction Network directory to assess whether immediate attention is needed or if repairs can wait until spring.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- BOND CONTRACTING & CONSTRUCTION INC
- Radon Lab
- G.D.K Drywall LTD.
- Earl's Paintworks
- Calgary Garage Builders Ltd

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Q14

Can I pressure wash my painted stucco in Calgary or will it damage the finish?

You can pressure wash painted stucco in Calgary, but it requires the right technique and pressure settings to avoid damaging the paint finish. Use a maximum of 1,500-2,000 PSI with a 25-40 degree spray tip, keeping the nozzle at least 12 inches from the surface. Higher pressures or narrow spray patterns will strip paint, especially on older or weathered surfaces that have been through multiple Calgary chinook cycles.

Calgary's stucco homes face unique challenges that make pressure washing both necessary and risky. The city's frequent dust storms, winter road salt spray, and UV exposure at our elevation create heavy soiling on stucco surfaces. However, the same chinook temperature cycling that causes this weathering also makes paint films more brittle and susceptible to pressure damage. **Premium acrylic latex paints from Benjamin Moore or Sherwin-Williams typically handle gentle pressure washing well for the first 3-5 years**, but older paint or budget-grade products may peel or chip under pressure.

Start with the lowest effective pressure and work up gradually. Test an inconspicuous area first — behind shrubs or on a side wall. Work from top to bottom in overlapping horizontal passes, never holding the spray in one spot.

Avoid spraying upward into horizontal stucco joints where water can penetrate behind the paint film. Use a mild detergent solution (like TSP substitute) for heavily soiled areas rather than increasing pressure. Calgary's low humidity means surfaces dry quickly, but ensure complete drying before temperatures drop if washing in shoulder seasons.

Alberta's building standards don't regulate residential pressure washing, but **WCB Alberta requires professional contractors to use proper safety equipment when working on multi-storey homes.** If your stucco shows signs of paint failure — chalking, peeling, or cracking — pressure washing may accelerate damage. In these cases, gentle hand washing with a soft brush and garden hose is safer.

Watch for these warning signs that indicate your stucco paint can't handle pressure washing: chalky residue when you rub the surface, visible cracking or peeling, areas where previous paint is already loose, or stucco that's been painted with lower-grade latex products. Heritage homes in neighborhoods like Hillhurst or Mount Royal often have multiple paint layers that may not bond well together — pressure washing can cause delamination between layers.

For routine maintenance, **annual gentle pressure washing helps extend paint life by removing corrosive road salt and UV-degrading dirt.** However, if you're planning to repaint within 1-2 years, skip pressure washing and let your painting contractor handle surface prep. Professional painters often prefer to work with weathered but intact paint rather than surfaces where pressure washing has created new adhesion problems.

Consider hiring a professional for pressure washing if your home is over two stories, has intricate stucco details, or shows any signs of paint deterioration. Professional painters understand how Calgary's climate affects different paint systems and can assess whether pressure washing will help or harm your specific situation. Many painting contractors include gentle pressure washing as part of their exterior prep work, ensuring the right technique for your paint's condition and age.

If you're looking for painting contractors who understand Calgary stucco challenges, the Calgary Construction Network directory can help you compare local professionals experienced with our unique climate conditions.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Johnny B's Painting
- Eshine Cleaning Services

- Supreme Painting
- Keystone Exteriors
- Besademolition

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Q15

How do I prevent exterior paint from cracking during Calgary's extreme winter cold snaps?

Exterior paint cracking during Calgary's brutal cold snaps is primarily caused by thermal shock and inadequate paint flexibility. The key is using premium 100% acrylic latex paint specifically formulated for extreme temperature cycling, proper surface preparation, and strategic timing of your painting project.

Calgary's winter temperature swings are among the most severe in Canada. When temperatures plummet from +5°C to -30°C overnight, or when chinook winds create 40-degree temperature swings in hours, paint films experience massive expansion and contraction cycles. **Rigid paint formulations simply cannot stretch and recover from this thermal stress, leading to hairline cracks that quickly become major failures.** The problem is most severe on south and west-facing walls that experience the greatest temperature extremes and UV exposure during the day followed by rapid nighttime cooling.

The solution starts with paint selection. **Premium 100% acrylic latex paints from Benjamin Moore (Aura, Regal Select), Sherwin-Williams (Duration, Resilience), or Dulux (Ultra Hide) contain flexible resins that maintain elasticity even at -40°C.** These paints cost \$65-80 per gallon but are essential for Calgary conditions. Avoid builder-grade latex paints and never use oil-based alkyd paints on Calgary exteriors — they become brittle in extreme cold and crack within one winter season.

Surface preparation is equally critical. **Calgary's dry climate makes old paint chalky and brittle, creating a weak foundation for new coats.** Scrape all loose and flaking paint, sand glossy surfaces, and prime bare wood with a high-quality bonding primer. On previously painted surfaces showing minor cracking, use an elastomeric primer that bridges hairline cracks and provides a flexible base coat. **Sherwin-Williams Loxon Conditioner or Benjamin Moore Fresh Start primers work well for this application.**

Timing your painting project prevents many cold-weather failures. **Never paint exterior surfaces when temperatures will drop below 10°C within 48 hours — latex paint needs this full curing window to develop proper flexibility and adhesion.** In Calgary, this limits exterior painting to May through September. Painting too

late in the season, even during warm October days, often results in winter failures because the paint film hasn't fully cured before the first hard freeze.

Application technique matters significantly in Calgary's low-humidity conditions. Use a paint conditioner like Floetrol to slow drying time and improve flow, especially on hot, dry days. Apply paint in thin, even coats rather than trying to cover in one thick application. **Two properly applied coats of premium paint will outperform three coats of budget paint every time.** Work in manageable sections and maintain a wet edge to prevent lap marks in the dry air.

Consider your home's exposure when planning maintenance cycles. **South and west-facing walls in Calgary typically need repainting every 5-7 years due to UV damage and thermal cycling, while north-facing walls may last 8-10 years.** Touch up any chips or cracks immediately after hailstorms — Calgary's frequent hail damage creates entry points for moisture that freeze-thaw cycles will quickly expand into major paint failures.

For homes with recurring cracking issues, **elastomeric coatings provide superior flexibility and crack-bridging ability.** These thick, rubber-like coatings can stretch up to 400% and are particularly effective on stucco homes that develop hairline cracks. Expect to pay \$80-100 per gallon, but these products can extend paint life to 10-12 years even on challenging exposures.

Professional application becomes worthwhile for homes with previous cracking problems or challenging exposures. Experienced Calgary painters understand local conditions, use proper primers and paint systems, and can identify substrate issues that cause premature failures. If you're planning exterior painting, the Calgary Construction Network directory can help you compare local professionals who understand Calgary's unique climate challenges.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Allure Residential & Commercial inc
- Durable Decks
- Jk Stucco
- Radon Lab
- New Earth Waste Services Ltd

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What's the best way to maintain painted kitchen cabinets so they don't chip in daily use?

Regular cleaning with gentle methods and protective habits will keep your painted kitchen cabinets looking fresh for years, but the key is using the right cleaning products and avoiding harsh scrubbing that damages the paint film.

The most critical factor in maintaining painted cabinets is daily cleaning technique. Use a microfiber cloth dampened with warm water and a few drops of dish soap like Dawn or Palmolive — never use abrasive cleaners, Magic Erasers, or anything containing ammonia or bleach. These harsh products will dull the paint finish and create microscopic scratches that lead to chipping. Wipe down cabinet faces weekly, paying special attention to areas around handles and hinges where grease and food particles accumulate. Always dry immediately with a clean cloth to prevent water spots and moisture damage.

In Calgary's dry climate, painted cabinets face unique challenges. The low humidity (especially in winter) can make paint films more brittle, increasing chip risk. Consider running a humidifier in your kitchen during heating season to maintain 30-40% humidity. This prevents the paint from becoming overly rigid and prone to cracking when doors slam or items bump against surfaces.

Handle and hinge maintenance prevents most cabinet chipping. Loose hinges cause doors to sag and scrape against frames, wearing away paint. Check and tighten hinge screws every six months. If handles are loose, they'll shift during use and create wear patterns around mounting holes. Replace worn cabinet hardware before it damages the paint — new handles cost \$3-8 each versus \$150-300 per door for professional repainting.

Protect high-wear areas proactively. Install soft-close hinges (\$15-25 per pair at Home Depot) to eliminate door slamming — the number one cause of paint chips on cabinet edges. Place adhesive bumper pads inside cabinet frames where doors make contact. For families with children, consider clear protective film on lower cabinet faces where kicks and toy impacts occur most frequently.

The quality of your original paint job determines long-term durability. Cabinets painted with premium products like Benjamin Moore Advance or Sherwin-Williams ProClassic, properly primed and spray-finished, resist chipping far better than brush-applied budget paint. If your cabinets were painted with lower-quality products or poor surface prep, they'll chip regardless of maintenance — professional repainting with proper prep and spray application is the only permanent solution.

For minor chips that do occur, address them immediately before moisture penetrates the substrate. Clean the area, lightly sand rough edges with 220-grit paper, apply matching touch-up paint with a small artist's brush, and seal with

clear topcoat once dry. Keep leftover paint from your original job for touch-ups — paint stores can also color-match from a clean cabinet sample.

When to Call a Professional

Consider professional cabinet repainting if you're seeing widespread chipping, the original finish is wearing thin, or you want to upgrade to a more durable spray finish. Professional cabinet painters in Calgary typically charge \$3,000-8,000 for a complete kitchen refinish, but the spray application and proper prep work will last 8-12 years versus 3-5 years for most DIY brush jobs. You can find experienced cabinet painters through the Calgary Construction Network directory to compare local options and pricing.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Royland Stucco
- Element Painting Inc.
- Jk Stucco
- Onsite Contracting and Electrical Services
- New Earth Waste Services Ltd

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Q17

What maintenance does a stained deck need each year in Calgary to keep the colour looking fresh?

Annual deck staining maintenance in Calgary requires power washing in late spring, spot touch-ups after hailstorms, and a full re-stain every 2-3 years depending on exposure. Calgary's extreme UV radiation and chinook temperature swings break down deck stains faster than in most Canadian cities, making consistent maintenance essential for preserving both appearance and wood protection.

Start your annual maintenance routine in late May once nighttime temperatures consistently stay above 5°C.

Power wash the entire deck using a fan-tip nozzle held 12-18 inches from the surface, working with the wood grain to avoid gouging. This removes accumulated dirt, pollen, and the top layer of degraded stain that gives decks that grey, weathered appearance. Allow 48-72 hours of dry weather before applying any new stain — Calgary's low

humidity helps, but trapped moisture under fresh stain causes adhesion problems.

Inspect for hail damage after every significant storm during Calgary's active hail season (May through September). Even small hail can chip stain from deck boards and railings, creating entry points for moisture. Touch up any damaged areas immediately using the same stain product and colour. Keep a small container of your deck stain specifically for touch-ups — most stains have a shelf life of 2-3 years if properly sealed.

South-facing and west-facing deck areas need the most attention in Calgary due to intense UV exposure and chinook wind effects. These sections may show fading and wear within 12-18 months, while north-facing areas can go 3-4 years between full re-staining. Watch for signs that maintenance staining is needed: water no longer beads on the surface, the wood appears grey or weathered, or the stain colour looks significantly faded compared to protected areas under furniture or planters.

For **annual maintenance staining**, use a penetrating oil-based stain rather than trying to build up multiple coats of solid stain. Products like **Cabot Australian Timber Oil** or **Sikkens Cetol Dek Finish** penetrate into Calgary's dry wood fibers and flex with temperature changes. Apply maintenance coats in thin, even layers using a pad applicator or brush — avoid rollers which can create an uneven appearance on previously stained wood.

Timing is critical for deck maintenance in Calgary. The ideal window is late May through early September when temperatures stay between 15-25°C and humidity is moderate. Avoid staining during chinook conditions when temperatures fluctuate rapidly, and never stain in direct sunlight on hot days — the stain will dry too quickly and leave lap marks.

Clean your deck furniture and planters regularly to prevent stain discoloration underneath. **Tannin stains from leaves and organic debris** are particularly problematic on lighter-coloured deck stains. A simple solution of warm water and deck cleaner applied monthly during the growing season prevents most staining issues.

Consider hiring a professional for deck maintenance if your deck is large (over 400 square feet), has multiple levels, or requires significant prep work like sanding or board replacement. Professional deck maintenance typically costs \$2.00-4.00 per square foot in Calgary and includes power washing, minor repairs, and quality stain application with proper equipment.

If you're looking for deck staining professionals in Calgary, the Calgary Construction Network directory can help you compare local contractors who understand Calgary's unique climate challenges and can recommend the best maintenance schedule for your specific deck exposure and stain type.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Calgary Garage Builders Ltd
- Quality count construction Ltd.
- Paysons Painting
- Mayken Hazmat Solutions LTD
- Wall Style Innovations

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Q18

What's the best product to clean painted exterior siding in Calgary before winter?

TSP (Trisodium Phosphate) or a dedicated house wash detergent like Krud Kutter House Wash is your best bet for cleaning Calgary exterior siding before winter. These products cut through the accumulation of road salt, prairie dust, and chinook-blown debris that builds up on Calgary homes throughout the summer and fall.

Calgary's unique climate creates specific cleaning challenges that require the right approach. The combination of intense UV exposure, frequent dust storms from the prairies, and road salt spray from winter road treatments leaves a film on exterior paint that plain water simply cannot remove. This buildup not only looks unsightly but can actually degrade your paint film over time, especially on south and west-facing walls that take the brunt of Calgary's weather.

TSP concentrate (available at Home Depot and most Calgary paint stores for around \$8-12 per box) remains the gold standard for heavy-duty exterior cleaning. Mix one cup per gallon of warm water and apply with a pump sprayer or soft-bristle brush. TSP cuts through chalky paint residue, salt deposits, and organic growth while being gentle enough not to damage quality latex paint. However, TSP requires careful handling — wear gloves and eye protection, and avoid getting it on plants or aluminum siding where it can cause discoloration.

For a more user-friendly option, **Krud Kutter House Wash** or **Simple Green Pro HD** offer excellent cleaning power without the handling concerns of TSP. These products are specifically formulated for painted surfaces and work well in Calgary's hard water. Expect to pay \$15-25 per gallon concentrate at Sherwin-Williams or Benjamin Moore dealers. They're particularly effective on vinyl siding and won't harm landscaping when properly diluted.

Timing is critical in Calgary. Clean your siding on a calm day when temperatures are above 10°C — ideally in late September or early October before the first hard frost. Avoid cleaning during chinook conditions when rapid temperature changes can cause cleaning solutions to dry too quickly, leaving streaks. Work in sections, keeping the

surface wet, and always rinse thoroughly with clean water.

The cleaning process itself matters as much as the product. Start from the bottom and work up to prevent streaking, then rinse from top to bottom. Use a soft-bristle brush for textured surfaces like stucco, but avoid pressure washing above 1,500 PSI on painted surfaces — Calgary's dry climate makes paint more brittle, and high pressure can drive water behind the paint film or strip paint entirely.

For stubborn stains common in Calgary — like rust streaks from metal fixtures or black streaks from asphalt shingles — you may need a specialized cleaner like Goof Off or Krud Kutter Rust Stain Remover. Test these products in an inconspicuous area first, as they can be aggressive on some paint formulations.

Consider hiring a professional house washing service if your home is more than one storey or if you have extensive stucco that requires specialized cleaning techniques. Professional services typically charge \$200-500 for a full exterior wash and have the equipment to clean safely and effectively. You can find experienced house washing contractors through the Calgary Construction Network directory to compare local options and read reviews from other Calgary homeowners.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Onsite Contracting and Electrical Services
- The Original Workshop
- Mayken Hazmat Solutions LTD
- Turnbull masonry
- Earl's Paintworks

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How do I fix paint peeling around Calgary windows caused by moisture condensation?

Paint peeling around windows from condensation requires addressing both the moisture source and the damaged paint. Start by improving ventilation and reducing humidity, then scrape the loose paint, prime with a moisture-blocking primer, and repaint with quality latex paint rated for high-moisture areas.

Condensation-related paint failure around Calgary windows is extremely common, especially during our harsh winters when indoor humidity meets cold glass surfaces. The temperature differential can be 40-50 degrees Celsius between heated indoor air and exterior glass temperatures of -30°C, creating perfect conditions for condensation. This moisture saturates the paint film and underlying drywall, causing the paint to lose adhesion and peel away in sheets.

The first step is **moisture control**. Run bathroom and kitchen exhaust fans longer after showers and cooking. Consider a whole-home humidifier set to 30-35% relative humidity maximum during winter months — Calgary's dry climate tempts homeowners to over-humidify, but excess moisture always finds the coldest surfaces. Check window seals and weatherstripping; drafts create additional condensation points. If you have single-pane windows, this problem will persist until you upgrade to quality double or triple-pane units with low-E coatings.

For the repair work, **scrape all loose and peeling paint** back to sound, well-adhered areas. Don't just paint over the edges — moisture will continue to work underneath. Sand the scraped areas smooth and check for any soft or damaged drywall. If the drywall paper is delaminated or the gypsum core is soft, cut out the damaged section and patch with new drywall compound.

Prime with a high-quality bonding primer like Benjamin Moore Fresh Start or Sherwin-Williams ProBlock. These primers are specifically formulated to seal moisture-damaged surfaces and provide superior adhesion. Zinsser Bulls Eye 1-2-3 is another excellent choice available at Calgary Home Depot locations. Apply primer to all scraped areas plus 2-3 inches beyond onto the existing paint.

For the finish coat, use **premium latex paint in satin or semi-gloss sheen**. The slight sheen helps moisture bead and run off rather than soaking into the paint film. Benjamin Moore Advance or Sherwin-Williams ProClassic are excellent choices for trim work around windows. These paints cure to a harder, more moisture-resistant finish than standard wall paints.

Alberta's building code doesn't specifically address paint moisture issues, but proper ventilation is required in all habitable spaces. If condensation problems persist after addressing humidity and improving ventilation, you may have a more serious building envelope issue requiring professional assessment.

Consider hiring a professional painter if you're dealing with **multiple windows, second-storey locations, or if the peeling extends beyond simple touch-up work**. Professional painters have the tools and experience to properly prep moisture-damaged surfaces and can often complete the work faster with better long-term results. They'll also spot potential building envelope issues that might require attention from other trades.

If you're looking for a painting contractor in Calgary to handle extensive window trim repairs, the Calgary Construction Network directory can help you compare local professionals and read reviews from other Calgary homeowners who've dealt with similar moisture-related paint issues.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Besademolition
- Wall Style Innovations
- Johnny B's Painting
- WestAim Construction Ltd.
- Paysons Painting

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Q20

How do I maintain epoxy garage floor coating through Calgary's salt-heavy winter months?

Proper winter maintenance of your epoxy garage floor coating in Calgary requires daily snow removal, weekly washing with pH-neutral cleaners, and immediate attention to any salt damage to prevent permanent etching and coating failure.

Calgary's brutal winter conditions pose serious challenges for epoxy garage floors. Road salt (sodium chloride) and ice-melting chemicals like magnesium chloride create a highly corrosive environment that can permanently damage epoxy coatings if not managed properly. The constant freeze-thaw cycling from chinook winds compounds the problem, as salt solutions penetrate micro-cracks and expand when frozen, leading to coating delamination.

The key to protecting your epoxy floor is **immediate salt removal**. Never let salt-laden slush sit on your garage floor overnight. As soon as you park your vehicle, use a squeegee or shop vacuum to remove standing water and

slush. The longer salt solution remains in contact with epoxy, the more it etches the surface, creating a dull, roughened appearance that cannot be reversed. This is especially critical with decorative flake floors, where salt damage shows up as white, chalky spots around the colour chips.

Weekly washing with a **pH-neutral cleaner** is essential during winter months. Mix one cup of Simple Green or similar pH-balanced cleaner per gallon of warm water and mop the entire floor. Avoid acidic cleaners (vinegar, citrus-based products) or alkaline degreasers during salt season, as these can react with salt residue and accelerate coating damage. Rinse thoroughly with clean water and squeegee dry. Many Calgary homeowners make the mistake of using hot water, which can cause rapid expansion of the epoxy and lead to cracking in extreme cold.

Preventive measures significantly extend coating life. Place absorbent mats at the garage entrance to catch initial drips from your vehicle. Consider installing a floor drain if your garage doesn't have one — this allows you to hose down the floor without creating standing water. Some Calgary homeowners apply a sacrificial wax coating in November (like **Meguiar's Endurance Tire Gel** diluted 1:1 with water), which provides an extra barrier against salt while being easy to reapply monthly.

Monitor your coating for early signs of salt damage: white chalky residue that doesn't wash away, rough texture in high-traffic areas, or small bubbles forming around the perimeter. These indicate the coating is beginning to fail and needs professional attention. Alberta's extreme temperature swings mean small problems become major failures quickly.

Consider hiring a professional for **annual maintenance** if your epoxy floor shows any signs of wear. Professional-grade topcoats and repair compounds available through Calgary suppliers like **Cloverdale Paint** or **Sherwin-Williams** can restore protection before complete recoating becomes necessary. Most quality epoxy installations in Calgary need professional refresh every 3-5 years with proper maintenance, or complete recoating every 7-10 years depending on traffic and salt exposure.

If you're looking for professional epoxy maintenance or repair services in Calgary, the Calgary Construction Network directory can help you find experienced contractors who understand the specific challenges of maintaining garage floors through Alberta winters.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Greenstone landscaping solutions
- Eshine Cleaning Services

- Element Painting Inc.
- True North Overhead Doors
- Amar Homes Inc

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Q21

How do I store leftover paint properly in my Calgary garage without it freezing?

Store leftover paint in a heated area of your home, not your garage. Calgary's winter temperatures regularly drop below -20°C, which will permanently ruin latex paint by breaking the polymer emulsion. Even a single freeze-thaw cycle destroys the paint's ability to adhere and flow properly.

Latex paint freezes at approximately -1°C to -3°C, and once frozen, it becomes chunky, separated, and unusable even after thawing. Calgary's garage temperatures can drop to -30°C or lower during cold snaps, making garages completely unsuitable for paint storage from October through April. Oil-based paints are more freeze-resistant but will still thicken significantly and may separate in extreme cold.

The best storage locations in Calgary homes are heated basements, utility rooms, or interior closets where temperatures remain between 10°C and 25°C year-round. **Avoid storing paint near furnaces, hot water tanks, or heat registers** where temperature fluctuations can cause the paint to skin over or separate. Also avoid unheated areas like crawl spaces, attached garages, or sheds.

Proper Paint Storage Technique

Before storing, ensure paint cans are properly sealed. Wipe the rim clean of dried paint, place plastic wrap directly on the paint surface to minimize air contact, then hammer the lid down firmly using a rubber mallet or piece of wood. Never use a regular hammer directly on the lid as this can create gaps. Store cans upside down for the first 24 hours to create an airtight seal, then flip right-side up for long-term storage.

Label each can with the room or surface it was used for, the date of purchase, and the paint code for future matching. **Premium latex paints from Benjamin Moore, Sherwin-Williams, or Dulux typically last 3-5 years when stored properly**, while lower-grade paints may only last 1-2 years. Oil-based paints can last 5-10 years with proper storage.

For small amounts of leftover paint, transfer to smaller glass jars or plastic containers to minimize air exposure. This works particularly well for touch-up quantities. Always store paint in original containers when possible, as the label

information is crucial for future reference and disposal.

If you absolutely must store paint in an unheated garage during Calgary winters, consider a small electric heater with a thermostat set to maintain 5-10°C minimum. However, this creates fire risk and increases energy costs significantly.

For projects requiring professional color matching or large quantities of paint, consult painting contractors through the Calgary Construction Network directory who can advise on proper storage and help coordinate future touch-up work.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Durable Decks
- Mayken Hazmat Solutions LTD
- Radon Lab
- G.D.K Drywall LTD.
- Canadian Closet

[View all contractors ?](#)

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Calgary Paint Contractors. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified, licensed contractors and your local building authority before starting any painting project. Information is current as of April 5, 2026 and may change. Visit calgarypaintcontractors.com for the latest answers.