

## CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF SPORTWORKS BIKE RACKS

### **General Guidelines**

In order to maintain optimum appearance of Sportworks bike racks, regardless of material and/or finish, it is important that care be taken to ensure the rack is not dirtied or damaged during transportation, site storage and installation. Store racks inside or undercover, in a dry area with good ventilation to prevent moisture entrapment. It is also recommended that bike racks are not removed from manufacturers packing until they are ready to be installed. In addition, we recommend installing racks after all other construction painting, treating and sealing processes and been completed.

### **Inspection:**

- Once installed, a routine inspection every 6 months or less is recommended.
- High saline environments (marine, or areas where roads are salted) or high traffic areas with abundant particulates or pollutants warrant more frequent attention.
- Identifying and addressing problems as early as possible to avoid progression of damage – rust on mild steel racks can propagate quickly in the right conditions.
- Tighten or replace loose or missing fasteners.

### **Cleaning:**

- For neglected or damaged racks, refer to the specific rack material and/or finish guidelines detailed on pages 2 through 4.
- For racks that only need cleaning to remove surface dirt and grime:
  - Use soft nylon brush to remove accumulated dirt.
  - Wash with mild soap or detergent – do not use abrasives, especially on powder coatings.
  - Rinse well with clean water.

### **Graffiti Removal:**

- We recommend Safewipes (from Urban Restoration Group: [www.graffitiremovalinc.com](http://www.graffitiremovalinc.com)) to remove spray paint and permanent marker. These wipes are citrus-based (so nice to the planet), and won't mar the original finish (powder coat, galvanizing, or stainless steel).
- Wipe down after graffiti removal with Afterwipes (also sold by Urban Restoration Group) or a soft cloth.

### **Sticker Removal:**

- Remove most of the sticker with a plastic scraper (not metal!) that won't scratch or dull the original finish on the rack.
- Heating up the sticker with a heat gun before scraping may be necessary to soften the adhesive (be careful not to overheat when doing this to a powder coated rack).
- For powder coated racks, remove any adhesive residue with a product like Goo Gone. This takes some time to work, but it won't harm the powder coat. Do not use abrasives, only a soft cloth.
- For stainless steel racks, Goo Gone or acetone may be used. Acetone is considerably faster.

### **Checking Rack Integrity:**

- Check to ensure that the rack is securely anchored to the ground by pushing and pulling hard against the rack sides. There should be no movement of the rack. If there is movement:
  - For embedded racks in concrete, there will likely be a gap between the rack and the concrete footings that will need to be filled with concrete or epoxy grout.
  - For surface mount racks anchored to the ground, first check that all the anchor components are there and are not damaged. Replace any missing or damaged anchor components. Then tighten all anchor nuts or bolts so that there is no rack movement when pushed or pulled.
- Check all other components of the rack for structural integrity, look for cracks near the welds, cuts, deformation, pitting rust or other abnormalities.
- It is also worth mentioning that thieves sometimes “pre-cut” a rack, then hide their cut with a circumferential sticker or duct tape. Rack users likely won’t notice this when they are locking their bike.
- If any of the above structural issues are identified, it is recommended the rack be removed right away and replaced, as it is no longer secure!
- For broken or missing parts, contact Sportworks Sales and Support Department by phone: 425-483-7000, or by email: [salesandsupport@sportworks.com](mailto:salesandsupport@sportworks.com)

## **Stainless Steel**

### **General tips:**

- With few exceptions, we recommend using stainless steel fasteners to install stainless steel products.
- Do not cut, weld, drill, or grind mild steel near stainless steel as the mild steel particulates can adhere to the stainless steel surface, and can rust, staining it.
- Don't use cleaning products that contain chlorides (such as muriatic acid) near stainless steel.
- Don't use abrasive elements. A fine Scotch Brite pad is the most aggressive pad we can recommend.
- Don't use steel wool or steel brushes on stainless steel, as the mild steel bristles will deposit free iron on the surface of the stainless steel, and this will eventually turn to red surface rust.
- Don't allow concrete detergents to contact stainless steel. If this is unavoidable, either wrap/tarp or immediately rinse the stainless steel and surrounding area with water.
- Avoid using aggressive abrasives on our glass bead-blasted finish – you can permanently change the cosmetic look, and there is no effective field repair.

### **Light cleaning:**

- Use soap or a mild detergent and warm water, followed by a clean water rinse.
- A final wipe down with a dry cloth ensures that you won't see water spots if your rinse has been less than perfect.
- If stubborn stains (red rust, brown/black oxides), scuffs or other discoloration persist, follow the deep cleaning process detailed below.

### **Deep cleaning:**

- Occasionally a deep cleaning may be required with a citric acid cleaner, such as CitriSurf 77 Plus, followed by a copious clean water rinse and wipe dry. Leaving the citric acid solution on the surface can cause discoloration if you don't rinse it well.
- For stubborn surface discoloration, use of a Scotch-Brite pad (such as 3M # 8447) with the citric acid cleaner may be necessary.
- Sportworks sells a citric acid cleaning kit for stainless steel (Part Number: 101229).
- Naval Jelly (available at most hardware stores) is also good for removing surface rust and discoloration.

Type of Damage	Treatment
Contamination: stainless steel contaminated with mild steel on surface	If caught right away, use a soft cloth to apply a solution of oxalic acid to the surface, and leave on for a few minutes. Rinse thoroughly with clean water.
Corrosion: if this appears, clean immediately	<p>Minor corrosion (surface rust): We recommend Citrisurf 77 Plus. Follow instructions and rinse thoroughly with clean water.</p> <p>Moderate corrosion (the beginnings of pitted rust): Use E-NOX CLEAN (from Walter Surface Technologies) or another phosphoric acid-based stainless steel cleaner. Spread evenly over the surface, wait 30-60 minutes, then neutralize the acid with an alkaline cleaner (e.g., UNO S F)</p> <p>Severe corrosion (pitting rust, going deep into the metal): Damage this bad may warrant replacement. To correct this, a pickling bath with corrosive hydrofluoric acid is required, followed by a rinse, then passivation with mild nitric acid.</p>
Mortar/Cement Spatter	Use E-NOX CLEAN (from Walter Surface Technologies) or another phosphoric acid-based stainless steel cleaner. Spread evenly over the surface, wait 30-60 minutes, then neutralize the acid with an alkaline cleaner (e.g., UNO S F, also from Walter Surface Technologies)
Oil/Grease/Adhesives	Use hydrocarbon solvents such as methylated spirits, paint thinner, isopropyl alcohol, or acetone.

**Powder Coated and Thermoplastic Coated Mild Steel**

**General tips:**

- Regular cleaning will improve appearance and life expectancy, especially when the rack is exposed to corrosive environments (industrial or marine locations, areas where salts are used to de-ice, etc.).
- Do not use acetates, dulon thinners, methyl ethyl ketone (MEK), acetone, or solvent-based products.
- Highly acidic cleaners are not recommended, either.

**Cleaning:**

- Clean with a dilute solution of mild liquid detergent and warm water. Avoid excessively hot solutions.
- Automotive based car wash detergents and standard deck cleaning detergents can also be used, but check to make sure the detergent is safe for use on painted surfaces. A small test area should be checked first.
- Use a soft bristle brush. Do not use abrasives on the coating.
- After cleaning, rinse thoroughly with fresh water.
- Ensure areas that are not normally exposed to rain are washed and rinsed also.

Type of Damage	Treatment
Coating is scratched down to bare metal	Best to correct this damage as soon as it appears! Use sandpaper/emery cloth to gently scuff scratches and surrounding area. Minimize scuffing to undamaged coating by placing sandpaper on a narrow surface, such as a pencil or flat scraper. All red rust must be removed. Apply an exterior metal primer to scuffed areas, making sure to cover all exposed metal. Once primer is dry, apply matching color enamel to the primed areas. It is worth noting that this fix is not perfect: It is difficult to “feather” edges on touch up paint, and gloss levels of the wet paint touch ups are likely not a perfect match. For a color matched touch up paint, please contact Sportworks Sales and Support Department by phone: 425-483-7000, or by email: salesandsupport@sportworks.com
White or light color powder coating becomes dull or light brown over time	A mixture of 25% bleach & 75% warm water can be used on “White” powder coat to brighten the finish. This mixture should be applied by a garden sprayer and allowed to soak no more than 10 minutes. Light scrubbing with a soft bristle brush can also aid in the results. Rinse with copious amounts of fresh water. Make sure you have no other items that will come in contact with the bleach.
Structural damage corrected by re-welding	While we recommend replacement, it is possible to repair some damage through welding in the field. All of heat affected zone of the welded area must be taken down to bare metal, and re-primed and re-painted with a matching wet paint (See “Coating is scratched down to bare metal” above).
Structural damage corrected by cold setting/re-bending	Powder coatings are not very flexible. Bending can cause the coating to crack and this should be repaired right away if it occurs (see “Coating is scratched down to bare metal” above).

### **Hot-Dip Galvanized Mild Steel**

#### **General tips:**

- There may be brightness variations at the early stages of exposure.
- The shiny silver surface will typically dull over time, and this is normal with exposure to the elements.
- Do not use highly acidic cleaners (such as muriatic acid). It is a good idea to test your cleaner on a small area first to ensure that it is not reactive with the galvanized coating.
- In areas where the zinc coating is breached or gone, remove all red rust, then cover those damaged areas using a 99% pure zinc aerosol like IPS Labs cold galvanize corrosion inhibitor.

#### **Cleaning:**

- Use soft nylon brush to remove accumulated dirt.
- Wash with mild soap or detergent – do not use abrasives, especially on powder coatings.
- Rinse well with clean water.
- Wipe dry.

### **Anodized Aluminum**

#### **General tips:**

- The best cleaners for anodized aluminum are in the pH range of six to eight. Seven is neutral (as opposed to acidic or alkaline), so you want cleaners that are close to neutral. Anything too acidic or too basic can damage the surface.
- Avoid cleaners with chlorine.
- While you may reach for baking soda as an easy and natural cleaner, it's not a good choice for anodized aluminum, as it is on the basic side of the pH scale. It can end up damaging the metal. However, the opposite is also true: acidic cleaners aren't recommended either. Basically, don't use anything too harsh on anodized aluminum
- Once the aluminum starts showing pitting and/or white chalking, there is not much to be done to correct the blemish, other than stripping the anodizing off, and re-anodizing the part.

#### **Cleaning:**

- Clean with dishwashing soap or Bar Keepers Friend and warm water.
- Rinse thoroughly at the end of the cleaning as any cleaning residue may eventually react with the aluminum below the anodic layer, and cause pitting.