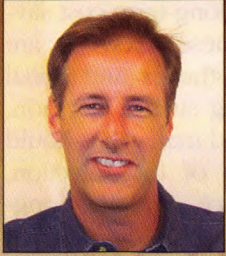


The Benefits of WOOD Restoration



By John Stoddard
Stoddard's - The Wood Care Specialists
Director of Sales

Wood, the forgotten treasure, healing the wounds ...
Without regular care and maintenance, all wood will start showing its age. The trick is to slow down the aging process. Regular maintenance is the secret to longevity and maintaining the beauty of the wood.

Before you can benefit from wood restoration, we must pause to understand exactly what it is the touch-up technician is trying to accomplish when repairing damage to a finished wood surface. Seldom is only the finish itself damaged. Almost invariably the wood beneath the damage is crushed, torn, or partially missing. There is no magic product or any single procedure that will solve every problem, and there is no such thing as a perfectly invisible repair. If we consistently strive for perfection, however, sometimes we can come excitingly close.

Some problems facing building management in regard to the wood surfaces in their buildings include: day-to-day wear and tear, graffiti, water damage, relocation of signage, and the installation or removal of hardware. The goal of the touch-up technician is to camouflage the damage or defect so that it no longer calls attention to itself, and, above all, satisfy the customer. If refinishing is required, although a more costly and extensive process, it too is a significant cost savings as opposed to replacement.

Virtually every color the mind can imagine can be found among the many thousands of different specimens or even trees within the same specimen. These colors may range from the almost black of ebony to the almost white of certain holly trees. Under some conditions the color
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Wood RESTORATION

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may change over long periods of time as the wood is exposed to light. In general, light woods tend to become darker, and dark woods tend to become lighter.

Most finishes will not need day-to-day care—We do not recommend using polishes and cleaners on your wood surfaces. Most polishes and some waxes contain silicone oil, and though this oil enhances the sheen to the wood, it can cause difficulty with respect to touchup. If you use a professional wood maintenance service, you should refrain from using polishes or waxes on the maintained surfaces. The simplest and safest way to maintain wood is to keep it clean and as dust free as possible. Simply use a damp, clean cloth, turning the cloth frequently. Dust can actually scratch surfaces, dulling the finish.

Lifting or broken veneers and/or wood pieces—Always try to protect that area from further damage and

never throw away any broken pieces. Most veneers can be reglued or patched and then touched up.

Sign installation and removals—A variety of adhesive products are used to anchor signage to doors or walls, and because of the damage or blemishes they leave behind when changed, touchup is often required. We are, however, seeing more and more buildings electing to not only use plaque signage instead of individual lettering, but they are also moving the signage to the papered or painted walls instead of the wood doors.

Periodic dilemmas—Often there is a variety of finishes throughout common areas in some buildings. This is often the result of tenant improvements with near or not-so-near misses in matching existing doors or wall panels. Usually the existing wood surface can be salvaged and restored at a fraction of replacement cost. Always first consult with a restoration professional when faced with replacing wood surfaces.

What to consider when remodeling or building a new office environ-

ment—In many buildings, new and historical, wood is a major part of the architecture. More times than not, there is little consideration given to the advantages and/or drawbacks of specific wood and finish selections. Whether for doors, baseboards, wall panels, or furniture, prudent research before finalizing your building standards can result in long-term cost savings. Oftentimes these decisions are based only on aesthetics and initial cost. Before making such a decision, building owners and managers should consider durability of the selection, ease of maintenance, and the long-term availability of additional or replacement pieces.

Part of your cataloged “building standards” pertaining to wood surfaces should include the type of wood, type and color of stain, and type of clear coat. Different wood, color, and finishes require different care. This will save time and money when having to restore or replace wood surfaces.

Finally, one way to minimize cost is to have an ongoing maintenance program. Wood restoration can be very cost effective—about one-fifth the cost of refinishing and approximately one-fifteenth the cost of replacement. Building owners and property managers looking into wood maintenance programs can pick a program that best fits each building’s needs to maintain the areas most in need year-round and prevent costly replacement.

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John Stoddard, sales director for Stoddard’s – The Wood Care Specialists, is a current member of the Orange County Friends of IREM, BOMA Orange County, and the National CPPC for the transit industry. Stoddard’s has been servicing Los Angeles, San Diego, Riverside, and Orange County for more than 20 years, providing full-service commercial and residential wood restoration. He and his team have been key participants in the restoration of several TOBY Award-winning properties over the past several years. John can be contacted at john@stoddards.cc. The company’s Website address is www.stoddards.cc.