Touch Up Painting and Damage Repair: Financial Responsibility and Definition of a Properly Painted Surface

1. Scope

1.1. The purpose of this standard is to establish the financial responsibilities for repair or correction of damage to finished painted surfaces.

1.2. It is the intent of this document to define “Touch up.”

1.3. A “properly painted surface” is also defined in this standard.

2. Significance and Use

2.1. This standard defines the repair and repainting of finished painted surfaces that have been damaged by individuals other than those employed by the painting and decorating contractor. This type of damage is defined as “damage caused by others.” Damage caused by others will be corrected by the painting and decorating contractor after a change order is received from the contracting entity.

2.2. The painting and decorating contractor will repair and/or repaint the damaged area after receiving acceptance of its proposal and authorization to proceed on either a lump sum or time and material basis.

2.3. “Latent damage” is due to conditions beyond the control of the painting and decorating contractor. This damage is caused by conditions not apparent at the time of initial painting and decorating.

2.4. The painting and decorating contractor will repair and/or repaint the damaged area after receiving acceptance of its proposal and authorization to proceed on either a lump sum or time and material basis.

2.5. The contractual work is job and item specific. In no case shall the painting and decorating contractor be responsible for “damage caused by others” or “latent damage” as herein described.

2.6. The painting and decorating contractor will produce a “properly painted surface.” A “properly painted surface” is defined as uniform in appearance, color, texture, hiding and sheen. It is also free of foreign material, lumps, skins, runs, sags, holidays, misses, or insufficient coverage. It is also a surface free of drips, spatters, spills or overspray caused by the painting and decorating contractor’s workforce. In order to determine whether a surface has been “properly painted” it shall be examined without magnification at a distance of thirty-nine (39) inches or one (1) meter, or more, under finished lighting conditions and from a normal viewing position.

3. Reference Documents and Standards

3.1. ASTM, Volume 6.01, of ASTM standard, D16-00 (published September 2000).

3.3. Painting and Decorating Encyclopedia, William Brushwell, Published by Goodheart-Wilcox, Touch up.


3.8. PCA Standard P9-04, Definition of Trade Terms.


3.11. SSPC, Protective Coatings Glossary.


3.13. If there is a conflict between any of the references and this standard, then the requirements of this standard shall prevail.

4. Definitions

4.1. CHANGE ORDER: An agreement to modify or alter the original contract work. This includes but is not limited to, corrective work for “damage caused by others” and “latent damage.” Adjustments to the contract amount and completion time should be part of this agreement. The change order will be issued by the contracting entity. [PCA Standard P9]

4.2. COLOR: One aspect of appearance; a stimulus based on visual response to light, and consisting of three dimensions of hue, saturation and lightness. [FSCT]

4.3. CONTRACTING ENTITY: The general contractor, owner of the property, construction manager, developer or other entity legally responsible for the agreement or authorized agent of any of the above. [PCA Standard P9]

4.4. CRACKS: For the purpose of this standard: A break in the substrate and/ or surface which can result in a subsequent break in the paint film.

4.5. DAMAGE: Abuse or injury to a paint film or substrate which would blemish its appearance or impair its usefulness or value. [PCA Standard P9]

4.6. DAMAGE CAUSED BY OTHERS: “Damage” caused by individuals other than those employed by the painting and decorating contractor. [PCA Standard P9]

4.7. FINISHED LIGHTING: Finished lighting conditions are described as those in place when the project is finished. This includes, but is not limited to, design lighting (e.g., wall washers, spots and floods, etc.) and natural lighting (e.g., skylights, clear view windows, window
walls, window treatments, etc.). [PCA Standard P9]

4.8. HIDING (Hiding Power): The degree or ability of an opaque coating, applied in a uniform film, to cover, mask or obscure the substrate to which it is applied, or the colors underneath. Hiding power is provided by the paint’s pigment. [MPI]

4.9. HOLIDAYS: Application defects whereby small areas are left uncoated. [FSCT]

4.10. INSPECTION LIGHTING: Illumination of the installed surface from an angle at an intensity sufficient to eliminate any shadowing that may be caused by other illumination striking the surface at any angle. [PCA Standard P9]

4.11. LATENT DAMAGE OR DEFECTS: Damage to surfaces by causes beyond the control of the painting and decorating contractor after the painting and decorating contractor’s work has been completed. Examples of such include, but are not limited to, building settlement, cracks, water damage, earthquake damage, nail and/or screw pops or expansion and/or contraction of substrate. [PCA P9]

4.12. NORMAL: According to a regular pattern; natural; according to an established rule or norm-setting a standard or norm. [Black’s Law]

4.13. NORMAL VIEWING POSITION: For the purpose of inspection a normal viewing position shall be at eye level at a minimum of thirty-nine (39) inches or one (1) meter from the wall. Inspection lighting can be used as defined in this standard. [PCA Standard P9]

4.14. OTHERS: Any individual or group of individuals other than the painting and decorating contractor or his employees. [PCA Standard P9]

4.15. OVERSPRAY: The paint that did not hit the intended surface during a spray application. This can appear as small raised specks around the area sprayed and can give a halo effect on smooth surfaces. [MPI] Spray particles that are not wet enough to fuse when they reach the surface being sprayed. As a result, overspray may contaminate property beyond the surface being sprayed. [SSPC]

4.16. PAINTING AND DECORATING CONTRACTOR: The individual or company contracted to apply paints, coatings, wallcoverings and other decorative finishes. [PCA Standard P9]

4.17. PIN HOLE: A minute hole in a paint film that resembles a pore or pin prick, often due to improper solvent release during drying or the trapping of air or gas in the film during setting. [MPI]

4.18. RUNS: Narrow downward movement of a paint film resulting in an irregular surface. [Craftsman’s]

4.19. SAGS: A coating irregularity similar to runs but often broader in scope. [Craftsman’s]

4.20. SHEEN: An attribute of object mode of appearance which is similar to luster; gloss with poor distinctness-of-image reflectance. In the paint industry the term sheen is generally used synonymously with gloss measured or observed at a grazing angle, such as 85° off the perpendicular. Sheen is therefore frequently evaluated in terms of gloss measurements made on an 85° glossmeter. Not infrequently there are coatings that are high in sheen, but have a low gloss when illuminated and viewed at or near the perpendicular. [FSCT]

4.21. STANDARD: Something established for use as a rule or basis of comparison in measuring or judging capacity, quantity, content, extent, value, quality, etc. The type, model or example
commonly or generally accepted or adhered to; criterion set for usages or practices. [Webster’s]

4.22. TEXTURE: Texture as used in a “properly painted surface” (means) the texture of the paint or coating system. [PCA Standard P9]

4.23. TOUCH UP: The correction of deficiencies in the specified work to achieve a “properly painted surface” as described in 2.3, above. (“Damage caused by others” or “latent damage” at times incorrectly referred to as touch up, are described in 4.5, 4.6 and 4.11 herein. The correction of “damage caused by others” and “latent damage” is distinct from touch up and addressed in 2.1 and 2.2 of this standard.)

5. Standard Specification

5.1. TOUCH UP: The painting and decorating contractor shall correct deficiencies in its workmanship to conform to the definition of a “properly painted surface” as defined in this standard.

5.2. “Latent damage” and “damage caused by others” shall be repaired by the painting and decorating contractor upon receiving a change order from the contracting entity. The painting and decorating contractor will proceed with the repair upon receiving acceptance of its proposal and approval to proceed from the contracting entity as outlined in this standard.

5.3. The acceptability of the surface shall be determined when viewed without magnification, at a distance of thirty-nine (39) inches or one (1) meter or more, under finished lighting conditions and from a normal viewing position.

5.3.1. Inspection lighting conditions will allow the finished surface to be viewed with minimal distortion which may be caused by the quality of the substrate preparation and/or illumination at an acute angle.

6. Comments

6.1. This standard clarifies areas of responsibility. Improved communication reduces misunderstandings.

6.2. This standard is a nationally recognized consensus document for the painting and decorating industry’s work practices.

7. Disclaimer of Liability

7.1. PCA does not warrant or assume any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness or usefulness of any of the information contained herein.