

AsktheBuilder.com

Deck Stain Test Results

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Early Spring 2013



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14BSTSLR

Introduction:

Each year I receive hundreds of emails from frustrated consumers. They're all looking for the deck sealer / stain that offers the best performance - they're looking for the Holy Grail of deck sealers.

I decided I'd do a side-by-side test of as many deck stains / sealers that I could get my hands on.

On May 12, 2012 thirty-two pieces of cedar decking and thirty-two pieces of regular treated lumber were stained with off-the-shelf wood deck stains / sealers.

Sixteen different wood sealers / stains were used to coat the lumber creating two identical sample sets. One set was immediately exposed to the weather and the other set was boxed up and stored indoors away from sunlight and all weather.

The control pieces placed in the box were to be used in a series of photographs to show how the deck stains performed after the other pieces weathered for nearly a year.

Every brand name deck sealer company was contacted to participate in this real-life test. Many companies refused to participate in the test.

I am planning to do a comprehensive test of all brands starting in early May of 2013. I'll purchase the brands that refuse to send samples for testing.

The following manufacturers submitted product in April 2012:

TWP, Armstrong's, Defy, Behr, Benjamin Moore, Wolman's, Sherwin Williams, Olypmic, and Thompson's. Some manufacturers submitted different blends and colors for the test.

Photo Legend and Test Conditions:

As you look at each photo, you'll see the wider cedar decking on the left and the shorter and narrower pieces of treated pine lumber on the right.

The pieces of wood that were exposed to the weather have two screw holes in each one as they were screwed to a flat 2x4 to simulate resting on a floor joist. They're the left-side samples of each pair (except in sample B where the treated lumber left outdoors is on the far right).

The pieces of wood exposed to the weather were set out on my dock on Lake Winnisquam in central New Hampshire. The shore line faces east, so the boards experienced brutal sunlight from dawn until mid-late afternoon.



The pieces of wood were set side-by-side on the dock separated by maybe 3 inches. In other words, the cedar and treated lumber each received identical amounts of sun, rain and shade.

The Winner in my opinion was the Behr Premium Semi Transparent Stain - Sample H. The LOSER was Wolman's Oil-Based Clear - Sample L. Sample P, came in a close second to H. Treated lumber contains copper which leaches out and kills mildew and mold if it gets enough sunlight.



TWP 1500 Clear - Oil Based
Semi-Transparent



TWP 1520 Pecan - Oil Based
Semi-Transparent



Armstrong's Amber
Semi-Transparent Oil Based



Armstrong's Natural Tone
Semi-Transparent Oil Based



Armstrong's Cedar Tone
Semi-Transparent Oil Based



Defy Extreme
Natural Pine - Water Based



Defy Extreme
Crystal Clear - Water Based



Behr Premium Weatherproofing Wood Stain
Semi-Transparent



Behr Premium Transparent
Natural Tone



Thompson's WaterSeal
Clear



Wolman's Clear
Water Based



Wolman's Clear
Oil Based



Wolman's Natural Cedar
Semi-Transparent Oil Based



Olympic Semi-Transparent



Sherwin Williams
Deckscapes Semi-Transparent



Benjamin Moore
Semi-Transparent Oil Based