

Historical Marker Repainting Guide

Indiana State Historical Markers are cast of recycled aluminum including the cap at the bottom of the sign. The current post is extruded aluminum. Some of the markers may only need the frame, cap, or post painted. Others may need to be completely repainted. The following instructions and paint information may be used for the restoration of the marker.

Materials needed for repainting a historical marker:

A wire brush or sand paper
Water (preferably from a hose hook up)
Mild detergent
Sponge brushes
Paint

Preparation for repainting historical markers:

Use a wire brush or sand paper to remove all loose paint and rust.

- In many instances, paint may have started to chip off the marker text. Use a wire brush or sand paper over these letters to create an even surface so new paint can be applied smoothly.

Wash with mild detergent, remove any other loose paint, rinse thoroughly, and allow to dry completely. A clean dry surface is essential before painting.

Optional: the marker manufacturer recommends painting the surface/s first with an undercoat to provide the best bonding with the finish coat. Talk to staff at your local paint, hardware, or home improvement stores for undercoat recommendations, and follow directions for drying.

Paint Information:

The dark blue background paint and the silver/gray frame paint should be fast-dry enamel suitable for exterior use. Staff at paint, hardware, or home improvement stores may be able to recommend suitable products and help with color matching.

For the dark blue background, use a product comparable to RUST-OLEUM Spray Paint Gloss Protective Enamel – Navy #7723.

For the frame, cap, and post on a marker, use a product comparable to RUST-OLEUM Gloss Protective Enamel – Aluminum #7715.

For the text and outline of the state, use any non-tarnish exterior-interior liquid gold. This type of paint may be found also in art supply or hobby stores. We have had several volunteers use Total Boat Total Gold paint or a similar product.

Painting the Marker:

*NOTE: Follow the printed instructions for each type of paint. Some surfaces (particularly the navy background) may require two coats depending on the conditions of the markers.

Spray paint the marker background with the navy enamel.

- Allow enough distance between yourself and the marker when applying the spray paint. Standing too close to the marker could cause paint to pool up in the crevices and drip along the background.

Use a sponge brush to paint the letters and state outline with the gold paint.

Use a sponge brush to paint the frame, cap, and post with the silver/gray enamel.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Casey Pfeiffer at 317-232-2537 or CPfeiffer@library.in.gov.

P.S. Don't forget to share! We want to acknowledge individuals, groups, or organizations that have restored an Indiana State Historical Marker, so please share a few before-and-after photos by emailing them to Casey at the address above.

You can also provide feedback and photographs via regular mail to:

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