## APPLYING FINISHES TO NEW WOOD

1. A water repellant preservative (clear coat) provides the best finish for your ramp. It can be applied immediately. If you choose to use a clear coat, apply a second coat 6-8 months after weathering.
2. An oil based penetrating stain (semi-transparent) has the best appearance and durability. This has a somewhat shorter lifespan than a solid color stain. However, it is more easily renewed; it does not peel and does not require scraping or sanding.
3. Light colored penetrating stains, whether oil or water based, last longer than dark ones. This is especially true if the ramp is most often in full sun. They also show the least contrast in grain color as traffic happens over time. Dark stains make the wood get hotter. Shadier areas tend to have mildew staining and green moss. *Avoid oil based products if the ramp is in shadier areas.*

## Area iv agency on aging and community action programs inc.

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*Services are provided without regard to race, age, color, religion, sex, disability, national origin, ancestry, or status as a veteran*

Tips for Maintaining Your New Ramp for Increased Longevity

# RAMP MAINTENANCE

Date of publication





TIPS FOR FALL AND WINTER MAINTENANCE

To ensure your safety while using your ramp in the fall and winter seasons, it is recommended that you follow these guidelines:

1. Keep the ramp free of leaves. They become slippery when wet and can potentially stain the surface.
2. Keep the ramp clear of sticks. They can get lodged in or under your wheels and be a tripping hazard if you are walking.
3. Always use a plastic shovel or broom for snow removal. A metal shovel can dig in and tear up the surface of the ramp.
4. Use a Quick Melt type product to get rid of ice.
5. **DO NOT USE ROCK SALT.** Rock salt hastens the corrosion of screws and other metal fasteners. It also adds to the degradation of the wood fibers.

REFINISHING IS REQUIRED EVERY 1-2 YEARS

Refinishing your ramp is best done in the spring. Before staining, clean ramp with Oxygen type bleach and water, or deck cleaner.

A good stiff bristled broom or brush with your choice of deck cleaner will remove mildew, dirt, and gray residue caused by sunlight degradation. Rinse thoroughly with clean water and let the wood dry for several days before applying finish.

**DO NOT USE A PRESSURE WASHER ON YOUR RAMP.** Too much pressure and/or the wrong nozzle can cause serious, permanent damage to the wood.

### ALWAYS USE A PRODUCT THAT HAS UV SUN PROTECTION TO TREAT YOUR RAMP

UV rays are most harmful to wood. It is recommended that you use a product that protects against growth of mildew and algae. Some natural water repellent products are actually food for mildew and algae.

USE OF A BRUSH, PAD OR ROLLER IS RECOMMENDED OVER A SPRAYER

Always work with the grain of the wood. Remember to seal the open end grains of the wood to prevent moisture from getting into the lumber.

### QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding maintenance of your new ramp, please contact the Area IV Agency on Aging and Community Action Programs Inc. offices.

Thank you for your participation in the Ramp-Up Program!

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