

Home Lawn and Garden

Wood siding requires upkeep but it adds a touch of class

Real wood siding adds a touch of class to just about any home. However, many homeowners shy away from real wood siding because of the upkeep.

Depending on the finish used and the type of wood, the finish on wood siding could last for two or three years and in some cases up to six or eight years and more. Refinishing wood siding is as inevitable as cold winters on the Prairies.

The main problem with real wood siding is that the wood commonly used is finished after it has been installed on the home. That means that only the face or side you see is finished. Also, most wood sidings are a lap type and even part of the face of the siding does not receive any finish. Because only the surface exposed to the elements receives a finish, moisture can get into the wood through the unfinished areas. On hot summer days this moisture is pulled through the wood, loosening the paint and causing it to flake or blister. This problem usually takes a few years to become evident.

There are a number of ways that moisture can get to the unfinished parts of the wood siding. One source is vapor pressure inside the home in the winter escaping through a poor vapor barrier and condensing on the back of the siding. Also, water or moisture can get in from outside. This can occur when rain water finds joints or areas where caulking has not been properly applied.

It makes sense then, if the best wood is chosen for the siding and all sides of the siding are finished properly with a very good finish, that it would eliminate most of these problems or at least reduce them considerably.

The experts acknowledge that Western Red Cedar is one of the world's most durable woods because of a natural preservative occurring within the tree. This oily substance gives the cedar its red color and protects the cedar wood from attack by insects and by other bacteria and fungi that cause decay. The red particles that protect the wood are known as: "Thujaplicin species indigenous substance against fungi and bacteria," according to their literature.

Now take the best wood available for use as siding for your home and finish it on all six edges in a controlled factory environment using a special process that ensures that the finish will be evenly applied and forced into the surface wood fibres and you have a product that will last for a long time. Six edges of each board are finished; the front, back, top, bottom and the ends, leaving no unfinished wood exposed to moisture or other elements.

Such a siding is available right across Canada. It is known as "Classic Coat Prefinished Cedar Siding System" by MacMillan Bloedel, Canada's largest producer of wood products for building.

The finish is made by Olympic Paints and Stains and is known as "Olympic Machinecoat" as it is applied by a machine in the factory that results in a solid-color finish that is uniform in texture and color. This Olympic solid color finish is a 100 per cent acrylic latex coating. Classic Coat siding is available in more than 100 colors.

The siding system comes complete with prefinished inside and outside corners and other trim and also color-matched nails.

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