

## **Paint, Paint, Paint!**

*By Bridget Busalacchi, HOA Assistant Inspector*

As homeowners in Colorado, upkeep of your home's exterior is crucial. Our inconsistent weather truly takes a toll on everything around your property, from your lawn and shrubs, decks and porches, windows and doors, and most of all paint. But, when it comes to painting your home, there are some vital points of information that you *need* to know.

### **What You Need to Know**

**Choosing Your Paint:** The seasons here in Colorado are extreme, to say the least. Summer is typically hot, dry and dehydrated, while winter is brutally cold and snowy. Which means typical exterior paints could face major problems when paired with our radical weather conditions. In fact, many of us may walk into our local home improvement store, go to the paint department, look for the label that says "Exterior", and choose a pretty color and leave. This is not the correct approach. There are a few factors you *need* to be aware of when choosing paint type, which includes chemical make-up, gloss, and color.

**Type** – This is your first step when choosing paint. There are many different types of paint, but choosing the right one, for the right climate is imperative.

**Acrylic Based** - Acrylic based paint is the most common choice for exteriors because of its ability to expand and contract as temperatures fluctuate. The chemicals found in most acrylic based paints also allow it to maintain its original color, even in the sunniest of conditions.

**Acrylic Enamel** – This type of paint is also extremely durable and resistant to sun exposure. Typically, Acrylic Enamel has a non-yellowing finish.

**Oil Based** – Oil based paints refer to paints with linseed oil or Alkyd base, which are durable, but will typically yellow and/or darken over time.

**Primer** - Remember to choose the type of primer that matches your chosen type of top coat. If you choose an acrylic paint, choose an acrylic primer; oil based paint, oil based primer and so on.

**Choosing Colors:** With Colorado having such a high altitude, it's with no surprise that the sun beats down hard upon our homes; causing fading, chalking and peeling of paint. But choosing the right color can help defend the look of your home.

**Lighter Shades** – Tans, Beiges, and Creams are among the most popular colors for the exterior of a home. The reason being, chalking (refers to the formation of a white, chalky powder on the surface of the paint film. This condition often occurs as the paint weathers and the binder is slowly degraded

by sunshine and moisture, releasing the binder's hold on the pigment) and fading tends to be less detectable than with darker colors.

**Pigments** – Simply, pigments provide color. But which is the right color?

**Organic pigments** such as greens, blues, and reds, tend to be the colors that stand out and make your house look one of a kind but, unfortunately, the façade of beauty won't last long, as these colors tend to fade the fastest.

**Inorganic pigments** such as yellows, browns, and creams are your best bet, as they tend to hide the imperfections presented over time.

**Choosing a Finish:** When choosing a finish keep a few things in mind; one, GVR allows flat to semi-gloss, and Two, which is better?

**Flat/Matte** - Flat (or matte) paint absorbs light and is good for hiding defects. Flat paint is ideal for main bodies such as stucco, wood siding, aluminum, and vinyl siding.

**Velvet/Satin** - Similar use as for flat/matte paint. Velvet paint has the lowest level of shine and also works well to hide defects. Also known as satin paint, it has a washable surface good for cleaning dirt or stains.

**Gloss** - Gloss paint is best used to highlight details and is easy to clean. Gloss paint is preferably used to accentuate soffits, eaves, trim, doors, and shutters.

**Maintenance:** Just as your car builds up dirt and grime, so does your house. To keep your home from looking dingy over the next few years, consider power washing it annually.

Washing the exterior of your home can help remove chalking of your paint (the main cause of discoloration) and make it look shiny and new.

As much as painting may seem like an inconvenience, or a waste of money, the facts are quite the contrary. A freshly painted home sells faster than a home without and ultimately increases the overall value of your home. This allows you to sell your home for quite a bit more, when the time comes.

**Choosing A Contractor:** Choosing the right paint contractor is just as important as choosing the right babysitter or landscaper. When you ask the right questions, the final choice comes easily.

1) Are they a part of NAPP (National Association of Professional Painters), PDCA (Painting and Decorating Contractors of America), or BBB (Better Business Bureau)?

2) Do they have a guarantee for their work?

Most professional paint contractors will stand behind their work. Look for a 2+ year guarantee.

3) Can they offer references for past jobs?

If a contractor does great work and has been in business for a while, they should have no problem sharing references of a job well done.

4) Do they have extensive product knowledge?

Ask questions. Which type of paint works best for Colorado climate and weather? How many coats of primer and base are appropriate?

For our list of preferred contractors, visit [www.gvrhoa.com](http://www.gvrhoa.com).