



A Closer Look at PVC Clear Top Sheets

The vinyl deck membrane industry has been trying to find and use a PVC clear top sheet since its inception. This would be the ideal “problem-solver” to protect the printed surface from scuffing and UV damage.

However, to-date, the successful use of a PVC clear top sheet on vinyl deck surfaces has not been achieved and there are no new patents out there claiming otherwise. Since UV stabilizers are opaque in nature, clear vinyl simply cannot have enough UV stabilizers in it to properly protect it in exterior applications.

PVC CLEAR TOP SHEET CATASTROPHE!



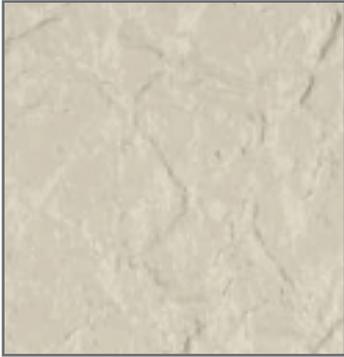
You won't believe what some homeowners are dealing with. This project was done in the summer of 2013. The owners went on vacation in June of 2014. **The vinyl turned black during their two weeks away!**

The change was so extreme that there is an imprint of the hose from where UV rays could not reach the deck surface.

In addition to “burning” and turning black, the exposed surface also emitted a burnt vinyl odor. Once the properties of vinyl (like the UV inhibitors) have started to break down, complete failure happens very quickly.

How Could This Deck's Surface 'Burn' so Severely in Only 2 Weeks?

The History of PVC Clear Top Sheets



Mid-80's - The Duradek Surcoseal Story

In the mid 1980's, Duradek tried adding a protective coat by including a clear PVC film on the top surface of the vinyl. Initially released in small test markets, the pvc clear top sheet appeared to be performing fine until the second summer of use when a fully exposed deck surface turned black and shrunk into little black piles of completely burned PVC and emitted a "burnt vinyl" odor.

Duradek immediately took it off the market to avoid further failed decks for homeowners and replacement costs for the company. Duradek honored all warranties but it had a serious impact on the company.

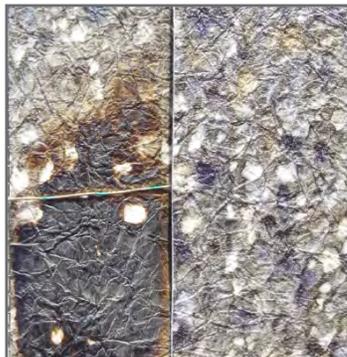


840 MJ - left | control - right

1999 - The HP Vinyl Brand Story

In the 90's, a PVC roofing manufacturer in eastern US brought out a product we will refer to as 'HP'. It was distributed by a national roofing distributor (in Canada only).

It had a pvc clear top sheet protection layer (which turned green when heat welded). This pvc clear coat started going dark at approximately 700 milijoules (MJ) of UV exposure. Duradek found out before they did that the product was going bad and some unfortunate homeowners were left with darkened, burnt-looking, unattractive decks that bore little resemblance to the product's original appearance with extreme cracking and shrinking of the patterned surface. They pulled it off the market a few months later.



840 MJ - left | control - right

2012 - The TD Vinyl Brand Story

"TD" gave it a try with a trademarked pvc clear top sheet that promised to protect from scuff marks. They claimed that they tested the product for 12 years. Since Duradek was unaware of any new technology for pvc clear top sheets, and had seen previous attempts fail, we wanted to see how this new product would stand up to UV exposure. We had a widely recognized material testing company conduct accelerated weather tests (ASTM G90) on this new 'Scuff Guard' pvc clear top sheets. As predicted, the results showed complete failure (at 840 MJ). "TD's response to these tests...we Photoshopped it or that we paid the testing company to show false results. Would a globally recognized, certified testing lab really take that risk? See for yourself..



840 MJ - left | control - right

2013 - The DR Vinyl Brand Story

Recently, the vinyl decking market had become flooded with an abundance of off-shore produced vinyl with a pvc clear coat layer. Being sold at a price well below what the market was offering, cost-conscious consumers were convinced that all vinyl is the same. This was a very expensive lesson on 'you get what you pay for'.

*** As of September 2020, it is to be noted that this product line seems to have vanished from their website. ***



840 MJ - left | control - right

2019 - The DT Vinyl Brand Story

Brand DT introduced a new PVC clear top sheet in 2017 called “Real Technology”. Upon further research and Accelerated Weather testing it was revealed that, much like the failed Brand TD, this topsheet was not UV stable. Test results showed signs of failing at 560 MJ of UV and a catastrophic failure at only 840 MJ of UV.

Recently, references to “Real Technology” have been removed from the DT Brand website, so we can only assume that they have pulled that product line due to these failures in the field.



840 MJ - left | control - right

COMPARE TO DURADEK



840 MJ - left | control - right



980 MJ - left | control - right

Atlas Material Testing Services in Phoenix, AZ
Phone +1-623-465-7356 - <http://atlas-mts.com/>



“But if something like that happened to my deck, I’d be covered, right?”

WHAT ABOUT WARRANTY PROTECTION?

See next page for important information on warranty protection...



An important part of researching vinyl brands is to check for an Appearance Warranty. Give yourself peace of mind of knowing the appearance of your vinyl is quality assured when selecting a vinyl brand for your deck.

BUYER BEWARE! - ALWAYS COMPARE!



Brand “TDs” Warranty:

“THIS WARRANTY EXCLUDES: Product appearance problems such as color variations from samples or printed illustrations compared to actual production runs, fading, reduction of gloss or discoloration resulting from, but not limited to: **weathering**, puddling, pedestrian traffic, misuse, **neglect**, hydrostatic pressure, fungus or bacterial growth;”



Duradek's Warranty: duradek.com/duradek-warranty/

“Duradek Warrants the surface appearance of the membrane for 5 years. Should the deck membrane, when installed and maintained in accordance with Duradek recommendations demonstrate excessive blotchiness, loss of pattern, or other aesthetic shortcoming over and above what would be considered its normal aging process;”

It's easy to make any unverified claims for new products with no history to draw upon, but a company with a 45+ year history that has gone through several warranty cycles and offers a warranty that covers Performance and Appearance (and actually protects the consumer) speaks for itself.

