

VHF HOUSE GRANTS PROGRAM

PAINT REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for VHF funding, preparation and painting must be approved by the Master Painters & Decorator's Association (MPDA). This nonprofit quality assurance company will provide the specifications for your house and conduct inspections on your behalf to ensure a high-quality, long-lasting paint job. The cost for the MPDA inspector should be included in the painter's quotes. If you plan to apply for a VHF grant for painting, you must ensure the painters are familiar with the following documents when obtaining quotes:

[Technical Specifications](#)

[Bidding & Contract Requirements](#)

Paint

The following are general guidelines for painting a historic wood house:

- Exterior repairs should be completed before exterior painting: i.e. foundation, roofing, drainage, windows, woodwork and trim repairs.
- Woodwork repairs to rotten siding or window sills should be completed before painting.
- Loose or warped siding or shingles must be nailed flush with surface using appropriate nails.
- Loose or deteriorated window putty must be removed and replaced with linseed oil glazing putty. This will need to be done by others, as linseed oil putty requires several weeks drying time before alkyd/oil primer can be applied.
- Exterior painting should be done when air and surface temperatures remain above 10°C for at least 24 hours before, during and after paint application.
- Wood moisture content should not exceed 15%; use a moisture meter.
- No exterior painting should be done when the relative humidity is above 85% or when the dew point is less than 3°C variance between the air temperature.
- Downspouts and other removable hardware should be removed prior to painting and reinstalled upon completion.



Fig. 1 Wood moisture content should not exceed 15% prior to painting.

Painting Preparation

The most important aspect of a paint job is preparation of the surface to be painted. An improperly prepared surface will not hold paint. If done correctly the first time, then maintenance will be less frequent and subsequently much easier.

- Proper safety procedures should be observed when removing existing paint or surface coatings.
- Remove damaged or deteriorated paint to the next sound layer using the gentlest method possible (scraping and sanding).
- No media (e.g. sand) blasting.
- No stripping by torch
- Ensure a clean surface, free of grease, dirt, mildew, etc. by washing wall surfaces, overhangs, porch ceilings and eavestroughs, inside and out, by hand with environment-friendly cleaners. Rinse thoroughly.
- Washing is acceptable by hand and garden hose.

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- Crystalline deposits, which develop under eaves and protected areas, are a major cause of peeling; remove by washing and rinsing as above.
- Power washing historic wood is not recommended and should never be used as a means of removing paint.
- If power washing, ensure that operator is experienced with historic wood and that low pressure below 600 psi is used.
- Water spray should always be directed downward and kept away from openings in the siding.
- House must dry between washing and painting to ensure surface will not resist new paint. Wood moisture content should not exceed 15%; use a moisture meter.
- Areas of heavy paint build-up, alligatoring, blistering, scaling and peeling, or areas which show a moderate to heavy chalk deposit must be thoroughly prepared to ensure paint adhesion. Remove to a sound substrate by scraping, wire brushing and sanding.
- No grinding or heavy abrasive sanding that damages wood surface.
- Glossy surfaces under eaves and protected areas that are not exposed to normal weathering should be dulled by sanding.
- Where bare wood is exposed, prime with a high quality alkyd (oil) primer.
- Loose or warped siding and shingles must be nailed flush with surface using appropriate nails.
- Fill all crevices, nail holes and cracks.
- All loose or split caulking is to be removed and replaced. Re-caulk with flexible, paintable caulking, and then prime.
- Do not apply paint in direct sunlight.

Painting or Staining Shingle Siding

- Shingle siding should be stained unless already painted.
- Stains penetrate the wood surface and are less likely to peel.
- On rough-sawn textured shingles, previously stained weathered surfaces must be thoroughly cleaned with a stiff fibre brush and a mild, biodegradable remover such as sodium hydroxide, to remove “dead” wood fibres.

Paint Types

- A minimum of two coats of top-quality paint should be applied; film thickness as per material specifications.
- Choice of paint will depend on condition of surface, the existing undercoat, location on house and design of house.
- Window sashes, doors, frames and trim must be done in gloss or semi-gloss.
- Old stains in wood will leach through latex paint. Wood must be sealed with an alkyd/oil-based primer.
- Half-timbering is meant to have a flat finish, to simulate an aged, medieval, rough hewn look.



Fig. 2 Wood half-timbering with stucco

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Historic Colour Schemes

Changes to colour schemes require approval through a [Delegated Heritage Alteration Permit \(DHAP\)](#) from the City. This is an expedited process and there is no fee.

A historically-appropriate colour scheme eligible for funding by VHF must be one of the following:

1. Professionally-documented original colours.
2. Historically-appropriate colour schemes. Please refer to [Your Old House, True Colours and True Colours for Western Canada](#) for more information including correct colour placement. Be sure to understand what style your house is (e.g. Queen Anne, Italianate, Craftsman, etc.) when referring to these sources.

VHF Colour Scheme Requirements

Submit the following with your application:

- Copy of DHAP application submitted to City if colours changed.
- Sketches or coloured-in photocopies illustrating colours and their placement on the architectural elements of the house.
- Colour manufacturer, number, formula or paint chip.

Lead Paint

If you are planning to paint the exterior of your house, you should be informed about the dangers of lead paint. Lead was common in exterior paint manufactured before 1990. You should assume that any home built before 1990 contains some lead paint. Lead in paint becomes a hazard when it is breathed in as dust created by sanding, grinding or cutting, or is otherwise ingested as chips, flakes or from residue rubbing off onto food through dusty/contaminated hands. You, your children, your neighbours and the workers can be exposed to lead any time you breathe lead dust, fumes, or swallow anything that contains lead. While lead in paint can be a serious danger, it can be safely removed. Procedures for handling lead paint are described in the WorkSafeBC publication [Safe Work Practices for Handling Lead](#).

Worksafe BC requires proper testing and procedures for handling and the disposal of lead paint. In 2019 VHF will reimburse homeowners applying for a painting grant for lead testing by a qualified hazardous material testing company up to a cost of \$250. This should be completed prior to obtaining quotes for painting. Please contact VHF for more info.



Fig. 3 Historical True Colours for Western Canada paint palette