

White and Gray Caulking

Installation Guidelines and After-Care Suggestions

Teakdecking Systems **SIS 440 Teak Deck Caulking** in white and gray offers the same performance results as black caulk, but their different pigmentation formulas make it necessary to adapt procedures for application, cure time, sanding, and general maintenance. The lighter colored caulks are not as “forgiving” as black caulk and subject to environmental staining and possible discoloration.

IMPORTANT: Follow all instructions as written on the cartridge or foil “sausage” packaging. The information below is supplemental and does not replace the instructions.

Installation Guidelines

Preparing and Cleaning the Seams

For all **SIS 440 Teak Deck Caulking** products from Teakdecking Systems (TDS), special care is required to properly prepare and clean the seam wall prior to caulking.

Work under cover when possible, otherwise only open seam as much as can be cleaned and re-caulked in the same day. Rain and sun light may affect curing time.

- 1) Final sanding with a TDS Seam Sander or similar tool should fair the seam’s surfaces, roughen remaining mill marks or saw ‘polishing,’ and also remove any wood grain filaments.
- 2) Thorough cleaning with a vacuum or air blower is mandatory to remove sawdust or other contaminants. Then the seams must be carefully cleaned with lint-free clean cotton rags and acetone. Contaminants left in the seams may show within the cured white and gray caulk (not as noticeable in black caulk).

Re-Seam Preparation: Old residue must be fully removed and this is best accomplished with a seam saw or router.

Bedding Compounds: Residue may be present on a new deck if installed in a bedding material. This residue must be fully removed from seams.

Seam Moisture Content: Must be 12% or less in surrounding wood. Do not caulk wet seams.

- 3) After all residue has been removed from the new or re-seamed deck, continue with seam prep instructions to sand, vacuum, and de-oil seams before starting the caulking. *Failure to take these steps may cause seam failure.*

Note: For challenging installations and difficult to bond areas such as butt joints or wood that may not be dried adequately we recommend TDS **Adhesion Promoter**.

CAUTION: *Do not use wood primers intended for other caulk products as that will defeat the adhesion of the product, void the warranty, and may cause staining within the cured caulking.* Most caulk applications to new teak will only require following our detailed “SIS 440 Application and Maintenance Instructions.” (See our Products Catalog or contact us.) However, we recommend use of a bondbreaker tape in the base of a seam (>3/16” or 5mm).

Filling the Seams

- 1) To facilitate filling, open tip of nozzle, puncture seal, then squeeze tip with pliers so nozzle fits into seam.
- 2) Fill seams from the bottom up and slightly *overfill* so that caulk is proud (1-2mm) of the deck surface after spooning and cures in this manner. If caulking cures below the deck surface it may trap contaminants within the caulk.

For deeper seams (>3/4” or 20mm): Careful attention is needed to completely fill caulk into the bottom of the deep seam, and a minimum of 2mm of caulk should be proud of the surface.

Cure Time and Sanding

Cure time is a function of (1) cross-sectional dimensions of the seam and (2) ambient temperature and humidity of the work area. Conditions of cold or very dry air increase cure time. Generally, the caulking cures from the top down at a rate of about 1 to 2 millimeters per day. A seam of 1/4” (6.4mm) under normal conditions (approximately 74°F/23°C at 50% relative humidity) will be ready for sanding in 8-12 days. When using white

and gray caulk, *allowing additional curing time is always helpful if the situation permits.* For larger seams (1/4"-3/4" or 6.4-19.2mm) or in colder, dryer conditions, a 12-day cure is recommended.

Problems Caused by Premature Sanding of Caulk Seams

Premature sanding of caulking that is not fully cured may result in shrinkage, deformation, and 'dragging' or wrinkling of the caulk surface. This must be avoided because uncured caulking will absorb the sanding dust as well as other contaminants, causing discoloration and potential compromising of the seam. When sanding white and gray caulk seams, it is helpful to start with 80 grit and then 'finish sand' with 100 or 120 grit sandpaper. This 'fine sanding' helps to smooth the caulk and will assist in preventing contaminants from accumulating in the small crevices.

After-Care Suggestions for Caulk Maintenance, Cleaning, and Repair

Maintenance

Light colored deck caulking is like other light colored accessories such as boat cushions and upholstery. Dirt and contaminants will show more and require more maintenance.

Caulk is a flexible material, so seams may raise and lower depending upon the moisture content of the teak. If seams remain high (relative to deck surface level) for more than six months it may be necessary to sand or cut the seams to plank level. Walking on high seams creates pressure and may cause damage to seams. Annual sanding of decks is recommended for routine maintenance.

Cleaning

Teak releases oil naturally and this oil will discolor caulk, showing more on white and gray caulk. This teak oil is most prominent on new decks and will diminish as the teak ages. Other oils, sealers, and coatings are likely to show more against light colored caulk too. Dirt, soot, or oily stains left on a deck for extended periods of time may leach into the caulking and cause staining and discoloration. *Note: Varnish will **NOT** properly adhere to **ANY SIS 440 Teak Deck Caulking.***

- 1) Normal Cleaning - Use TDS **ECO-100 (Powder)** and **ECO-300 (Liquid) Teak Cleaners**, designed to be used as often as desired. They are both *U.S. Clean Marina* and *MARPOL* compliant for safe discharge into any waterway or marina. When possible, use these cleaners with medium grit scrubbing pads (e.g. Scotchbrite-type medium grit). These are very effective and will help to smooth the deck. Problematic stains such as diesel, wine, fish blood, etc. must be cleaned immediately with the **ECO-100** or **ECO-300 Teak Cleaners**, or if this is not possible then spot cleaners such as K2R Marine Cleaner can also be effective.
- 2) Stubborn Stains - A light sanding of the seam with 80 grit sandpaper may remove stain(s). For best results, finish the seam with 100 or 120 grit sandpaper to ensure a smoother finish on the caulk surface.

Repair

For particularly stubborn stains that cannot be removed, or if the caulk is gouged/damaged, it is easy to make a repair. Cut out a small amount of caulk in a "V" shape; wipe with a clean lint-free rag soaked in acetone; then tape and re-caulk the area with **SIS 440 Teak Deck Caulking**. It will strongly adhere to the old **SIS 440 Teak Deck Caulking**, making it impossible to separate the old and new caulk areas once cured. To help blend the color, you may lightly sand the repaired area after curing or simply wait. With time, repairs will be almost impossible to see.

Teakdecking Systems appreciates your purchase of our high-quality decking products. We are an employee owned company of almost 150 members, specializing in pre-manufactured teak decks and related products.

TDS has been the "THE PROFESSIONALS' CHOICE" for 35 years and we are always happy to hear from our customers. Please contact us with ANY questions you may have.

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