



Doors - Windows - Roofing - Siding - Stone

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With winter quickly approaching most homeowners are preparing their homes for the onslaught of cold temperatures, ice, and snow. This process could mean a number of things depending on your location but here in the midwest snow removal is one of our biggest hardships. This past year Covid-19 kept many people home for weeks if not months on end and in all their spare time homeowners built decks in droves. Regionally we experienced massive deck lumber, composite, and pvc decking shortages! With all the new deck owners this winter season it's imperative we talk about snow removal and winter maintenance.

Most composite and pvc decks are scratch resistant but not scratch proof which means as a homeowner you need to be careful with what you use to remove snow from your deck surface. Never use a metal shovel on your deck! Even the most resilient boards could be scratched or gouged. Instead, use a plastic shovel or a plastic/nylon bristled deck broom. Always shovel snow in a path parallel to the deck boards, not perpendicular. Do not use an ice chipper, even a plastic one, on your composite or treated deck. It could permanently damage the deck boards. If the snow is light you can clear it fast and easily with a leaf blower.

When it comes to choosing the best ice melt products **Fiberon** decking recommends choosing a calcium chloride-based "ice melt" or rock salt to remove snow and ice. Look for phrases like "safe for concrete", "safe for flagstone", and "will not kill grass" in the product description. These are often milder and won't damage your decking. Avoid ice melt with added colorant these dyes can stain composite and pvc decking. Fiberon does not recommend using sand as it is naturally abrasive and can damage your deck surface.



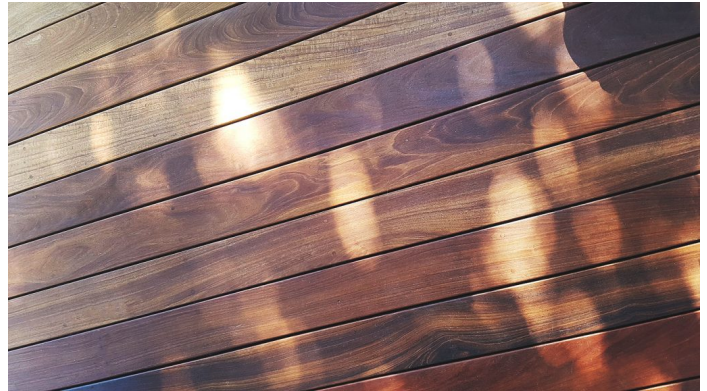
It's also important to remember that come spring when the threat of inclement weather has passed, any ice melt debris or build-up will need to be removed and cleaned from your decking surface. Use a broom and sweep the remaining granules from your deck. Rinse it with a garden hose and scrub using a nonmetal deck brush.

Zuri decking recommends using calcium chloride to prevent or remove ice build-up on deck surfaces. Salt-based products can leave behind a white deposit on Zuri decking but it can be cleaned with water and scrubbing. If stains are not cleaned quickly they can be more stubborn to remove and may require a mild detergent and water. When selecting a scrub brush Zuri recommends using a soft bristle brush, terry cloth rag or a soft sponge. You can also power wash Zuri decking but the maximum PSI can not exceed 2700 PSI and a 25 degree or greater cone nozzle. Excessive pressure with aggressive cone nozzles could cause permanent damage to the board and void your warranty.

Removing heavy snow from Zuri decking surface may require a plastic shovel or leaf blower. Follow the previously listed shoveling procedures we included in the above section on Fiberon.

In addition to all the previously listed helpful care and snow removal instructions **Trex** decking also recommends removing debris such as leaves, sticks, and rocks from your deck before the first snowfall. Removing these hazards can help keep harmful stains or scratches from occurring on your deck surface. Additionally, older versions of Trex composite decking, such as Accents, should be rinsed off as soon as possible after the use of calcium chloride or rock salt. Any hard water stains can be removed with white vinegar, rinsed, and then thoroughly dried with a cloth or a blower. If you use a power washer make sure it is no greater than 3100PSI.

Composite deckings are among the most popular types of deck material on the market. However, treated deck boards and exotic hardwoods are still popular options for homeowners.



Wood decks will absorb and release moisture as well as expand and contract through the year. If you put harsh chemical products on a deck it will corrode and rapidly dry it out, making your deck brittle and less stable. Rock salt can stain your deck. Do your research into ice melting products for your specific species of wood decking.

It is important to note that preparing your wood deck before winter is also very important. Properly sealing your wood deck or oiling your hardwood deck is key in keeping your deck material from absorbing moisture from snow that accumulates on its surface.

There are numerous online claims of people having success with pet-safe ice melt on wood decking as it is eco-friendly and therefore less corrosive than rock salt.

That being said exotic hardwoods are extremely durable in incimate weather and are more scratch and gouge resistant than composites, pvc's and softwoods like cedar. For example, Ipe is a high-density hardwood that places like Coney Island use for decking material and they drive trucks and plows right over its surface. Therefore, if you have an exotic hardwood deck you don't have to be as careful using things like plastic shovels and plastic ice chippers. Additionally, any pet-safe salt or ice melt residue can be removed with power washing and then refinished with hardwood oils.

