

## The Pink Stain Phenomenon

A message from one of our manufacturers

“To prevent replacing your upholstery, we recommend the following: Regular washing with mild detergent and warm water or vinyl cleaners is sufficient to keep the cushion and vinyl coverings in good condition. Keep the cushion from becoming soaked, and dry thoroughly after washing to prevent mildew accumulations when the boat is covered. Prop up the cushions in the boat when it is covered to take advantage of air circulation. Spray with a mildew repellent. While your vinyl is made to withstand the elements, it is important to care for it by keeping it clean at all times. Many substances may stain your vinyl if left untouched over a period of time. Remember to remove any contaminant and clean vinyl immediately. Our vinyls are made to withstand the effects of sun, heat, acid rain and soiling, under normal conditions.

Please consult the following cleaning recommendations before cleaning your upholstery: Certain household cleaners, powdered abrasives, steel wool, and industrial cleaners can cause damage and discoloration. These are not recommended for use. Dry cleaning fluids and lacquer solvents should not be used as they will remove the printed pattern and gloss. Waxes are not recommended because many contain dyes and solvents that can permanently damage the protective coating. In some instances, consumers have reported the appearance of a pink stain on vinyl that is resistant to various cleaning methods. Our lab tests indicate that the pink stain has been present in the past, but it becomes more visible to the naked eye whenever the whitest-white vinyls are used. This is true regardless of manufacturer or vendor.

Our company has chosen a white that reduces the appearance of the pink stain but retains as much of the lightest white we can use. Although there can be other causes for pink staining in vinyls, most pink stains are caused by dyes produced by micro-organisms. These dyes are metabolic products of the micro-organisms, otherwise known as a form of fungi. It is virtually impossible for consumers to avoid these micro-organisms as they exist in the atmosphere. It is also more prevalent in high-humidity areas. Rain can cleanse the air with the result that the micro-organisms are deposited on items such as marine vinyl. While the vinyl is treated to resist the growth of micro-organisms meaning the vinyl is not a food source), the stain results from failure to properly clean and maintain the vinyl. This means that after use, the upholstery must be cleaned with a soft brush and warm soapy water, followed by a thorough rinse with clean water. If this procedure is not followed, the micro-organisms can find the marine vinyl to be a suitable host site. This situation is worsened if the boat is stored without proper ventilation or if the boat cover is put on while the vinyl is still wet, creating a situation in which all forms of fungi (mold and mildew) thrive. The organism causing the pink stain has been identified by the Burlington Scientific Corporation as *Streptovorticillium reticulum*, although there are other strains of organisms that can cause stains.

Failure to follow these instructions in the proper care of upholstery can cause your warranty to be voided! The cleaning table presented in this frequently asked question section is offered only as a suggestion and as an aid in attempting to deal with stains. We cannot guarantee that the cleaning methods will work. Stains from any external source are unlikely to be covered by warranty.”