

Maintenance and cleaning of Avery Dennison decals and graphics

Introduction

Avery Dennison films can be maintained with cleaning detergents that are common to the professional maintenance of vehicles and advertising equipment. Detergents used should comply with the following requirements: -

- free from abrasive components
- neither highly acidic or alkaline (pH preferably between 3-11).
- free from strong solvents and/or alcohol's.

All cleaning activities shall be executed in line with the detergent manufacturer's written instructions, especially those that relate to:

- health and safety.
- diluting the concentrated detergent or cleaning fluid.
- washing procedure.

Avery Dennison Film decals or graphics should not be cleaned within the first 48 hours after applications. After this initial period it is recommended that graphics should then be maintained on a monthly basis, (or more depending on user preference).

Conventional cleaning of Avery Dennison graphics

Avery Dennison Graphic Film graphics may be cleaned using all conventional automotive washing methods. In all cases the prescribed manufacturer recommendations should be followed. Special attention should be given to length of time the graphic is in contact with the detergent. This should not be longer than prescribed recommendations. Excess detergent should be thoroughly rinsed off.

All cleaning agents shall be diluted following the instructions of the cleaning agents or detergent manufacturer. The cleaning solution should not be chemically aggressive: preferably they should range within the mild acid or mild alkaline limits (pH 3-11).

Use of solvents and/or abrasive cleaning agents may damage the graphic and should therefore be avoided.

Cleaning procedure:

1. Check if loose dirt particles cover the graphic: in such circumstances flush with ample water to remove (loose dirt particles may scratch the surface at using brush or sponge). A low pressure hose nozzle is suitable for this job.
2. The (diluted) detergent solution shall be used to wash the graphic with a sponge or mild brush. Do not move solid particles with the sponge or brush: these should be rinsed off with a hose supplying water. Wash from the top down so that the dirtiest part is well exposed to detergent.
3. After all dirt is removed, rinse well so that all detergent residues are removed from the graphic surface.

High Pressure or Power Cleaning

Avery Dennison graphics can be cleaned with high pressure cleaning equipment, provided the following conditions are respected:

Maximum pressure : 80 bars (1200psi)

Maximum water temperature : 70 °C (158° F)

Minimum nozzle distance : 75 cm (30") (should be maintained between graphics and dispenser nozzle).

The dispenser nozzle should preferably be aimed face-on to the graphics to be cleaned: not angled.

The dispenser nozzle shall be adjusted to a $\pm 40^\circ$ angle spray pattern.

- Warning:**
- Sharp angled power cleaner jets of water may damage the edges of the graphics and cause de-lamination
 - High pressure **steam** cleaning should be avoided as the extreme heat can interfere with the adhesion on the films.

Removal of difficult contaminants

Most dirt can be removed/washed by the methods mentioned above. However, some dirt (particles) may stick to the graphics surface persistently. Typical stubborn dirt includes diesel oil spills, tar or other road dust (salt, rubber etc). Generally, these require stronger means to remove. Most of these dirt spots can be removed, using cloth, soaked in mild solvents such as white spirit and heptane. Thick, persisting dirt particles may firstly be removed with a soft, non damaging scraper, followed by a wipe with a soaked cloth wiping. After the successful removal of such stains, always wash areas with water and detergent.

As stronger dirt removers such as solvents may damage a (printed!) graphic or even the paint surface, we recommend to test in an inconspicuous area of the graphic prior to cleaning the full graphic.