



CARE & MAINTENANCE OF WEATHERING STEEL PRODUCTS

Weathering Steel Properties: The term weathering steel refers to the chemical composition of the material, which allows the products to exhibit increased resistance to atmospheric corrosion compared to other steels. The steel forms a protective layer on its surface under the influence of the weather. The layer protecting the surface develops and regenerates continuously. In other words, the steel is allowed to rust in order to form a protective coating.

Appearance: Tournesol Siteworks weathering steel products, unless otherwise indicated, are shipped unweathered with the natural mill scale finish. The presence of scale will affect the appearance of the rust. These products may begin to rust in transit. Although the initial rust patina develops within weeks, complete rusting may take years to develop. The uniformity of the rust finish and rate of rust formation varies greatly based on environmental conditions, including humidity, presence of salt (seashore), and temperature at the installation location. Exact color of the patina will change over time from a vibrant orange to a darker brown color.

Speeding up the weathering process:

- Clean oils off the metal surface before treatment. Denatured alcohol works well.
- Process is best done outside, so the sun can help heat and dry the surfaces
- Spray the surface with a saltwater solution every few hours for at least a few days. The surface needs to dry completely before reapplication.
 - Use a spray bottle filled with a solution made of 1/2cup (4oz) salt per gallon of water. Warmer water dissolves salt faster.
 - Stay away from iodized salt or anything with additives. Plain road salt works best.
- After you've got a good patina started switch to just water. Do this for a few days at the same interval.
- You can get darker patinas if you spray with salt water longer, but the color and rate will depend on the environment.
- The best results take the most time

Staining: All rust is water-soluble. Rainwater, dew, or other moisture that runs off the planter will be rust-colored. Rust staining will likely occur on any surface the planter is mounted on, as well as any path that rain runoff follows, and any gutter/drain system near the planter. Even exterior sealants applied after weathering will likely wear off over time, and the runoff may stain.

Long-term: As the protective rust barrier forms over time, the amount of rust in the runoff will lessen. Any re-exposed surfaces (scratches or otherwise) will re-rust. The protective barrier forms when the surface becomes wet, then dries. ***If the material doesn't dry, the steel may continue to corrode.*** This makes product in areas with high rainfall, humidity or persistent fog susceptible to continued corrosion and premature product failure. Planters should be free-draining, or, if the pot lacks drain holes, should be treated with interior waterproofing prior to planting.

Contact your Tournesol Siteworks salesperson for further information.