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THE FEATHERLITE

# Trailer Tipster

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A Weekly Service for Featherlite Dealers

## Washing procedures for Featherlite trailers

With the winter season upon us, we thought it'd be a good time for a reminder on the proper ways to wash and maintain trailers.

### Before Washing

One of the first things you want to do before you start washing a trailer is to deal with the surface temperature of the aluminum on the trailer.

For example: If the trailer has been sitting outside in the hot summer sun, you will need to rinse the trailer down with cold water. If you don't, the acid could react too fast and possibly streak the trailer. If the trailer has been sitting outside in the cold, it is recommended that it is warmed up to room temperature or rinsed with hot water to raise the temperature of the aluminum. If this is not done, you could be very likely just wasting chemicals because the acid will likely freeze on contact and then when it starts to thaw, it would streak/burn the panels as it runs down the side of the trailer. Once you have done this step, then you are ready to wash the trailer.

For most trailers, you will only need two people, one washing and one rinsing, when and where needed. Smaller trailers can be washed and rinsed by one person.

**NOTE:** The number one thing to remember when you're washing any trailer is to not let the acid dry on the trailer. This will streak and burn it.

**CAUTION:** Before you start washing the trailer, make sure you have all your personal protective equipment on to protect yourself from the chemicals.

### Washing the Trailer

New trailer or one just sitting on the lot that needs to be refreshed: If the trailer is new and just being delivered or one just needing to be cleaned up on the lot, we recommend you spray the entire trailer down first with hot water and then use the Shine & Shield to clean your trailer and reseal it right away. Wash the panels and sheets, etc.

Trailer that required some rework/welding: You need to pay more attention to any new welds than the

panels and sheets because as long as you keep the acid on the trailer from drying, it keeps cleaning and will not streak. However, we recommend that after you have completed one side that you stop and rinse it thoroughly with hot water if available. After the entire trailer has been washed, then rinse the whole trailer again starting from top to bottom using cold water flushing out the sheet seams, windows, door jams, etc. This will help prevent streaking if the trailer is moved before it is completely dry.

Once the trailer has been completely rinsed and you should find some welds that didn't come completely clean during the wash process, you can use the Aluminum Weld Cleaner straight on the weld. Brush with a small steel brush or rub with a rag on your finger tip, and then immediately rinse thoroughly. Should this still not yield results, then use some Aluminum Brightener, following the same procedure as just stated and remember to always rinse thoroughly or burning and streaking of the aluminum may occur. If the trailer has painted sheets and the acid didn't clean off the maker or dirt, grease, etc., you can also use simple green cleaner / degreaser to remove those marks. When the detailing is complete, you must re-rinse the entire trailer again with cold water.

If you use the Aluminum Weld Cleaner or the Shine and Shield, there is no need to apply any other sealer because it is already added to the chemicals. It cleans and seals all at the same time.

### Important Note:

From April 16 to September 14, all trailers are automatically sealed as they are washed at the factory; the sealer is already added to these chemicals.

From September 15 to April 15, all trailers are sealed with a 2nd sealer that is used to protect them from the road chemicals. If the trailers are not rinsed thoroughly, they may sometimes have a milky appearance when not rinsed off completely.

**The first thing a dealer should do when they receive a trailer is rinse it with hot water to rinse the road chemicals, etc off.**

