Stainless Steel Washroom Accessories

Stainless steel is a low-carbon steel that contains at least 10 percent chromium. The addition of chromium gives the steel its unique corrosion-resisting properties. Mills Partitions are fabricated from type 301 stainless steel, which contains 16-18% chromium and 6-8% nickel. Bradley uses it because it is extremely durable, resists corrosion, stands up to many chemicals, and is easy to fabricate.

Stainless steel is very resistant to rust, however this does not mean that it is impervious to it. Stainless steel must be kept clean and free from contaminants. Frequent cleaning with mild soap and water or glass cleaner and a cotton cloth is required. Sometimes stainless steel products will develop corrosion or discoloration due to environmental and installation conditions. The following is a list of common conditions that cause corrosion or discoloration of stainless steel and should be avoided:

- Chloride containing cleansers - this includes pure bleach and any cleaners containing bleach
- Muriatic acid (hydrochloric acid) - commonly used to clean up after tile/concrete installation
- Concentrated soap residue - chemical additives will cause discoloration and some dried soaps will actually look like rust
- Water with high iron content - can leave a rusty residue, especially if allowed to drip continuously
- Contact with iron materials - including steel wool, machining chips, and iron residue/dust from installation or cleaning of other steel products
- Trapped moisture between the product and another object - rubber mats, metal cans of soaps or cleaners
- Salts - contain chlorides

Any discoloration or corrosion should be removed as soon as possible, or permanent discoloration and pitting of the surface could occur. Usually, the product can be restored to its original condition. Most discoloration can be removed with a mild cleanser (Ajax, Bon Ami, etc.) or stainless steel cleaner (Revere Ware Stainless Steel Cleaner, Goddard's Stainless Steel Cleaner, etc.) and a Scotchbrite pad. The surface should then be thoroughly rinsed with clear water. With proper maintenance, stainless steel will maintain its luster and appearance indefinitely.

My stainless steel is rusty? What do I do?

The following is a guide to help you choose a cleaning method that best fits the finish and the product in question.

Cleaning method	Applicable finishes	Notes
Naval jelly - available at hardware, marine and automotive supply stores	Bright polished and satin finishes (mirrors, partitions and dispensers)	Follow directions on side of bottle. Must be rinsed well with water. Tends to brighten surface so should be used on entire product. This is an acid based product and safety precautions on product must be followed. Does not work as well on rougher finishes.
Mild abrasives - Bon Ami, BarKeepers Friend - available at hardware, discount and grocery stores	Satin finishes (partitions and dispensers)	Do not use any product containing bleach or other chlorides. Put mild abrasive on soft wet cloth. Rub evenly over entire surface of item. Rinse well and wipe dry.
Abrasive pads - Scotchbrite or other non-metallic pad - available at hardware, discount and grocery stores	Rougher finishes (peened grab bars)	Use a mild abrasive cleaner (described above) on a damp abrasive pad. Rub in the direction of the grain. Clean entire part to ensure continuity of the finish. Rinse well with water and wipe dry. Do not use this on fine finishes as it will destroy the intended finish.

Once the discoloration is removed and the environmental condition eliminated, the metal and finish should be as good as new. If the environmental conditions cannot be removed (i.e., chlorine in the air in a pool locker room), the item should be cleaned often and rinsed with clear water to prevent permanent damage to the stainless steel. If items are not regularly cleaned, pits may develop and the item's surface may be permanently damaged.