

## TECHNICAL BULLETIN

# Colour variation and Tannins in Red Cedar

## COLOUR VARIATION

Red cedar naturally shows color variations that are part of its appeal. Depending on the part of the tree and its exposure, boards can range from deep reddish-brown to lighter golden tones. These differences are normal and reflect the natural richness of the wood. They give the siding an authentic and unique look, making it a popular choice for its warm and distinctive character.

## ABOUT TANNINS

Tannins act as a natural chemical defence against pathogens, insects, and rot fungi. Their role is to protect the wood and maximize the durability of red cedar without the need for chemical treatment.

Tannins are found mainly in the heartwood. Tannins are frequently found in siding because this is the part of the tree used most to make siding.

Tannins mainly appear when moisture is present.

In these cases, brownish or yellowish spots appear.

The use of primers to block tannins will mitigate the appearance of these stains.

Applying a finish, such as 100% acrylic paint, which protects against liquid water but breathes to allow moisture to escape, also promotes the appearance of tannins.

## POSSIBLE TREATMENTS

Certain recommended products are soft enough to preserve the finish yet effective for cleaning stains:

- **Oxalic acid:** powerful cleaner for tannin stains
- **Tannin Remover (Rubio Monocoat):** ready to use, effective on oiled or raw wood [Tanin Rem...de tanins]
- **Woodlux Wood Brightener and Neutralizer (Benjamin Moore):** designed for outdoor woods such as cedar, removes tannin and rust stains

Otherwise, if left alone over time, most tannin stains will gradually wash away naturally through frequent exposure to rain and various weather conditions.

