

ZIP DEE MAINTENANCE

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT YOUR AWNING

Just a little TLC and your Zip Dee awning can give you quality service for 15 to 20 years! Because a Zip Dee awning is usually so trouble free, it often is taken for granted. Yet, there it is, hanging outside your coach, scoured by blistering heat, freezing cold, blasting sand, acid rain and all kinds of things. The engine gets its oil changed, the coach is washed, the windows get squeegee...but the awnings often just get a rinse and a promise. The two main parts of the awning, the hardware and the fabric, need your attention for only a few hours each year.

HARDWARE

The hardware of your awning (that's everything that's not fabric) needs to be cleaned and lubricated. The rules are simple: Wipe off (use soap and water for stubborn dirt) all parts you can reach. Spray lubricant on any that can't be wiped off. Use aerosol Silicone Lubricant, not WD-40 or grease, which can attract dirt and don't leave a lasting film.

The telescoping bars and tubes of each arm can be slid completely apart, one arm at a time, and wiped off. Flush out the inside of the tubes with water from a pressure hose. No lubrication needed.

Flush and spray parts that don't come apart. The little spring loaded snaps on each arm don't come apart, so spray them with lubricant. Flush out the springs trapped in the rafter arms (near the claw-shaped casting) then spray with Silicone. In general, lubricate everything that moves or rotates, like the ends of the roller tube. Spray into the gaps between two moving parts like you would spray for ants.

The bright finish of the aluminum will dull over the years. Chrome polish will help a little for appearance. For luster, spray on Silicone, not for the lubrication, but for the shine. Finally, use a 7/16" socket wrench to tighten every nut and bolt you can see. Nothing should be loose.

FABRIC

Care of the **fabric** is easier...and harder. It is easier because just a monthly hosing off with clear water (no soap) keeps the material looking better, longer. This helps prevent dirt from becoming deeply embedded in the fibers and eliminates the need for more frequent deep cleaning. Mildew is the main destroyer of most woven fabrics. Because Sunbrella® is made of non-organic acrylic fibers, it doesn't support mildew fungus, but dirt can! Pollen, seeds, leaves and even bird droppings on fabric can lead to mildew growth that can stain an awning fabric. That's why you want to hose off the fabric.

What makes Sunbrella® fabric so special is that it is woven of colored acrylic fibers that give it brilliant color, easy cleaning and long life, compared to the extruded plastic sheets that other awnings use. The weave lets it "breathe," which is why it dries so quickly with only air exposure and doesn't drip on you in humid weather. The fabric is treated with a fluorocarbon finish that makes it water repellent, (not waterproof). Spray can come through in a hard rain, but with care, the finish can last the life of the awning.

Every two or three years, a thorough cleaning is needed. Don't just wait for the fabric to look dirty. That gives dirt a chance to set and the stains may not come out. Deep cleaning is not hard. Brush off the loose dirt, hose the awning down then, scrub the awning with a clean, soft bristle brush using Zip Dee WashOut powder concentrate or a solution of 1 gallon of cold or lukewarm water with 1/4 cup natural soap (DO NOT USE DETERGENTS OR COMMERCIAL AWNING CLEANERS). For stubborn stains, add up to ½ cup of chlorine bleach. Allow the soap to soak in by rolling the awning closed for 10-15 minutes, then rinse very, very thoroughly. The air will dry the awning fast.

Not surprisingly, all this information and more is in your Zip Dee Owners Manual that is probably buried under all the other instructions and information that came with the coach.

Finally, a few hints about operation. Two questions most often asked are "How much wind can the open awning handle?" and "How much rain is too much?" Although there are technical answers to each, the practical guide is this: if it is too windy for you to sit under the awning, it's probably too

windy for the awning. Don't use the awning to collect rainwater - barrels do a better job. Do what ever is needed to make water run off!

That may mean lowering both sides of the awning! I know, the door rubs. However, if you are gone or asleep, no one is going in and out. Play it safe.

For more information, Parts Lists or Manuals, you can call Zip Dee at 1-800-338-BEST (2378). You'll always talk to a knowledgeable service person, not a machine.