
Clears Tops and Sidewalls for Event Tents

The following information is provided to give users better knowledge of what to look for in clear tops and sidewalls for event tents.

Structural Quality

In general clear vinyl has less structural integrity than the typical tent fabric, because there is no internal scrim cloth to hold it together. By its very nature it is more susceptible to scratching, cracking, shrinking, and marring. A clear Panel may only be useable for 3 to 6 "A Party" uses. Over all life expectancy of clear panels used in rental, would never be more than 6-15 uses. Many rental dealers get more uses out of their tops and sidewall, however they are extremely careful in how these parts are handled. We suggest that you charge accordingly.

Fabric Integrity

To make clear available for public assembly tents it must have chemicals in it to make it flame resistance. The California Fire Marshall Standards and NFPA 701 require this. When manufacturing clear with this specification the following occurs

1. Product put away wet or damp will tend to fog up and after drying out may return to clear.
 - a. Repeated storage in damp conditions will cause it to fog up and not clear up when dried out.
2. Folding clear on the same line continually may cause it to crake as its flexibility deteriorates with each exposure.
3. Shrinkage of product happens with each exposure or long storage times.
 - a. All clear vinyl presently available in the US will shrink with time. Most manufacturers specification is from 2%-5%.

After a period of time and a number of uses, tops will tend to pull in slide track systems more difficult and not reach all the way to the edge of the frame. Sidewall that fits well in its early life may not fit in later life.

Manufacturing processes to reduce the above

The SEC Group and its licensees have developed a system of putting clear panels in roofs and sidewall, with a small amount of white vinyl round the edges for reinforcement. This has proven to increase the longevity of panel and reduce the shrinkage problem.

Maintenance of the product

Like any other vinyl product, it needs to be washed to keep dirt and other contaminants from damaging the vinyl. It should be washed with shampoo style soap, safe for vinyl fabric. Scrubbing with a medium soft nylon bristle brush is appropriate. Rinsing and hanging the panels to dry is the best method of drying. Hand wiping may also be appropriate.

Storage of Panels

Folded and rolled is the most appropriate for top panels. Folded and rolled is acceptable to store clear sidewall. However if clarity is important on sidewall, it should be hung in a cool dry warehouse until the next use.