

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 usable for three to six "A Party" uses. Overall, the life expectancy of clear panels in real works rental applications will average 6-8 uses before it starts showing wear and tear. Sidewalls will have a longer life expectancy, but are more variant on weather conditions. Some rental dealers get more use than this out of their clear tops and sidewalls, because they are extremely careful in how these parts are handled. We suggest you charge accordingly and get your investment back within the first two or three rentals.

Fabric Integrity.

To make clear vinyl available for use in public assembly tents, it must have chemicals in it to make it fire resistant, as required by California Fire Marshal Standards and NFPA 701. When manufacturing clear with this specification, the following occurs:

- ***Product put away wet or damp will tent to fog up, and after drying out, may return to clear. If continually stored in damp conditions, this may not clear up when dry, and the wall will need to be replaced.***
- ***Folding clear on the same line continually may cause it to crack as its flexibility deteriorates with each exposure.***
- ***Shrinkage of product happens with each exposure or with long storage times.***
 - ***All clear vinyl presently available in the U.S. will shrink with time. Most manufacturers specify from 2-5%, but it can vary greatly depending on the conditions.***

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

Manufacturing Processes to Increase ROI.

Rainier Tent has developed a system of using clear panels in roofs and sidewalls, with a small amount of typical vinyl around the edges for reinforcement. This has proven to increase the longevity of each panel and reduce shrinkage.

Product Maintenance.

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.

Panel Storage.

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