

Specializing in the
Manufacturing of
Church Furnishings
and Decor



RATIGAN – SCHOTTLER MANUFACTURING

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We have received many calls and emails concerning the cleaning/disinfecting of pews and upholstery because of Covid-19. Unfortunately, there is no one clear answer because of the many different types of finishes used on pews. Modern finishes are very durable and are resistant to most household chemicals and cleaners. Some of the older finishes are not resistant to specific cleaning agents, and the finish can be damaged. The damage to the finish does not always show up immediately; therefore, it is highly recommended not to use harsh cleaning agents or disinfectants on wood surfaces. Wood finish suppliers recommend a very mild soap and water mixture to clean the pews. Anything more than this may damage the pew finish. Various mild detergents on the market are easily obtained, can be purchased in bulk, are concentrated, and are safe to use on any wood finish. I have personally witnessed many pew finishes that have been severely damaged/removed, particularly on the pew cap rails, because the wrong cleaning solution was used. A warm mixture of water and a mild detergent will provide the desired outcome without damaging the wood finish. Wipe on the mixture and wipe off with a clean, soft cloth.

The CDC is providing information on how to kill the Covid-19 Virus. We want to keep you safe and not kill your furniture!

Although this method is not as convenient and easy as using a disinfecting wipe, it will not harm the finish. As with all cleaning materials, you should test this in an inconspicuous place to ensure there will be no damage to the finish. If the pews have not been regularly cleaned over the years, you may be horrified by the amount of dirt and grime you remove, sometimes exposing a portion of the pew, where the finish may be worn off. Because any cleaning material will build up after several applications, we recommend a product by Guardsman called Wood Scent Wood Polish. This material will remove any residual cleaning agents and will leave a protective coat of wax over the finish to help maintain the beauty and durability of the finish. Doing this a couple of times a year will help to keep the pews clean and protect the finish. This product can be purchased at ACE Hardware Stores and furniture stores.

Okay, now for the upholstery. This is somewhat of a tricky one again because of the many types of fabrics used on pew seats. We recommend a mixture of 70% Rubbing Alcohol and 30% water. Spray the mixture very lightly over the top of the fabric and let it dry. As with any cleaning solution, do a test spot first to make sure it does not damage the fabric. Make sure to wipe off with a clean, soft cloth any spray that gets on the wood surface.

Please feel free to contact us here at Ratigan-Schottler if we can answer any questions as we all navigate through these uncharted waters. <http://www.ratiganschottler.com> or 1-800-383-1000.

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