Parking Garage Power Washing

Removing residual deicing chemicals from your parking garage driving/walking surfaces is an important preventive maintenance step, which should be completed each spring after the last freeze. Even if you never use chemical deicers, cars carry this material into your garage.

Due to the textured surfaces often found in garages, power washing is an effective means of dislodging and washing away residual deicers. Careful choice of equipment and the process used are both important in mitigating damage to sensitive elements of the garage. A skilled workforce is equally important in recognizing and evaluating sensitive areas.

Sensitive areas include pavement markings, joint sealants, urethane coatings and expansion joints. Unintentional damage to these areas can easily result. Repairs to these areas can be very costly.
Important Steps and Consideration:

1. Plan your work – walk the deck with knowledgeable staff to identify and evaluate all sensitive areas. Consider how you will clean each location.

2. Pre-clean accumulated debris – debris obscures the surfaces to be cleaned. Also, fine debris may end up in your drain system causing clogs. Filter drains, if necessary.

3. Choosing equipment

   a. Inspect your equipment before starting. Look for warn hoses, oil leaks, proper fittings, etc.

   b. More is not better. Moderate pressure between 2,500 and 3,000 psi is sufficient to accomplish the task.

   c. Spray nozzle choice should be a fan-tipped head with a spread of 40 degrees or greater. Check with your equipment supplier. These heads are often color coded. The use of rotary head nozzles should not be used.
4. Process
   
   d. Hold spray nozzle 12” above the surface at an angle and use a constant swaying motion to avoid prolonged direct spray. This process is intended to remove built up deicers, not to remove embedded dirt.
   
   e. Start at high locations and work toward drains
   
   f. Care must be taken around sensitive areas. Predetermine how you will clean these areas. It may be necessary to hold the spray head further away from these surfaces.

   When in doubt call a parking garage professional for assistance.