

National Park Service Preservation Briefs

Preservation Briefs are available free on the web at www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm. If you do not have access to the Internet, please write to Historic Preservation Services to request the brief pertinent to your needs. You may order 1 copy each of 5 different briefs per request: Larry Hunter
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Preservation Briefs 1: The Cleaning and Waterproof Coating of Masonry Buildings: Provides guidance on the techniques of cleaning and waterproofing and explains the consequences of their inappropriate use.

Preservation Briefs 2: Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Brick Buildings: Provides information on appropriate methods for repointing brick buildings.

Preservation Briefs 3: Conserving Energy in Historic Buildings: Provides information on materials and techniques to consider or avoid when undertaking energy conservation measures in historic buildings.

Preservation Briefs 4: Roofing for Historic Buildings: Provides a brief description of the most commonly used roofing materials in America. Presents a sound approach to roof repair, roof replacement, and the use of alternative roofing materials.

Preservation Briefs 5: The Preservation of Historic Adobe Buildings: Provides information on the traditional materials and construction of adobe buildings, and the causes of deterioration. Makes recommendations for preserving historic adobe buildings.

Preservation Briefs 6: Dangers of Abrasive Cleaning to Historic Buildings: Cautions against the use of sandblasting to clean various buildings and suggests measures to mitigate the effects of improper cleaning. Explains the limited circumstances under which abrasive cleaning may be appropriate.

Preservation Briefs 7: The Preservation of Historic Glazed Architectural Terra-Cotta: Discusses deterioration problems that commonly occur with terra cotta and provides methods for determining the extent of such deterioration. Makes recommendations for maintenance and repair, and suggests appropriate replacement materials.

Preservation Briefs 8: Aluminum and Vinyl Siding on Historic Buildings: Discusses the appearance of various types of historic wood siding and makes recommendations for repair and replacement. Outlines the very limited circumstances under which substitute siding may be an acceptable alternative.

Preservation Briefs 9: The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows: Provides useful information on evaluating and repairing historic wooden windows found in typical rehabilitation projects. Emphasizes practical methods for homeowners or developers.

Preservation Briefs 10: Exterior Paint Problems on Historic Woodwork: Identifies and describes common types of paint surface conditions and failures. Provides guidance on preparing historic woodwork for repainting, including total paint removal.

Preservation Briefs 11: Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts: Explores the role of the storefront in historic buildings and provides guidance on rehabilitation techniques for historic buildings as well as compatible new storefront designs.

Preservation Briefs 12: The Preservation of Historic Pigmented Structural Glass (Vitrolite/Carrara): Provides information on the early manufacture, installation, and use of this decorative building product commonly found in 20th century buildings; reasons for its damage; and a general approach for its maintenance, repair, and replacement.

Preservation Briefs 13: The Repair and Thermal Upgrading of Historic Steel Windows: Presents brief historical background on the development, use, and styles of rolled steel windows popular in the first half of the 20th century. Explains steps for cleaning and repairing; weather-stripping; storm panels; or thermal glazing.

Preservation Briefs 14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns: Uses a series of examples to suggest ways that attached new additions can successfully serve contemporary uses as part of a rehabilitation project while preserving significant historic materials and features and the building's historic character.

Preservation Briefs 15: Preservation of Historic Concrete: Problems and General Approaches: Focuses on reinforced concrete (cast-in-place or reinforced), useful for anyone undertaking repair or limited replacement. The guidance addresses the causes of concrete deterioration, the signs of deterioration, and actual concrete repair.

Preservation Briefs 16: The Use of Substitute Materials on Historic Building Exteriors: Includes a discussion of when to use substitute materials, cautions regarding their expected performance, and descriptions of several substitute materials together with their advantages and disadvantages. Summary charts are included.

Preservation Briefs 17: Architectural Character: Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings: Essential guidance to help property owners and architects identify those features that give historic buildings their visual character so that their preservation can be maximized in rehabilitation.

Preservation Briefs 18: Rehabilitating Interiors in Historic Buildings: Assists building owners in identifying significant interior spaces, features, and finishes so they may be preserved in rehabilitation work. The guidance applies to all building types and styles, from 18th c. churches to 20th c. office buildings.

Preservation Briefs 19: The Repair and Replacement of Historic Wooden Shingle Roofing: Discusses historic wooden roofing, expectations for longevity, and repair and replacement options. Identifies roofing material that duplicates the appearance of a historic roof, offers guidance on proper installation, and more.

Preservation Briefs 20: The Preservation of Historic Barns: Identifies historic barn types, helps owners understand the historic character of their barns, and offers advice on the maintenance, repair, and rehabilitation of old and historic barns.

Preservation Briefs 21: Repairing Historic Flat Plaster--Walls and Ceilings: Guides building owners on repairing historic plaster using traditional (wet plaster) techniques. Suggests replacement options if the historic plaster is severely deteriorated. Chart on various plaster bases and compatible basecoats and finish coats.

Preservation Briefs 22: The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stucco: Describes the evolution of stucco as a popular building material. Includes guidelines for the property owner on how to plan for and carry out repair of historic stucco, with sample mixes for 18th, 19th, and 20th century stucco types.

Preservation Briefs 23: Preserving Historic Ornamental Plaster: Discusses ornamental plaster production, and the processes of run-in-place and cast ornamentation using three common decorative forms: the cornice, ceiling medallion, and coffered ceiling. Includes advice on selecting and evaluating a restoration contractor.

Preservation Briefs 24: Heating, Ventilating, and Cooling Historic Buildings: Underscores the importance of careful planning in order to balance preservation objectives with the interior climate needs of the building. Useful charts are included.

Preservation Briefs 25: The Preservation of Historic Signs: Discusses the history of sign types pre-1800 to the 20th century, including symbol signs, flat signs, fascia signs, hanging signs, gold-leaf signs, rooftop signs, and neon signs. Makes recommendations for their repair and re-use.

Preservation Briefs 26: The Preservation and Repair of Historic Log Buildings: Focuses on horizontally laid or vertically positioned logs, but the preservation and repair techniques are essentially the same. Discusses splicing-in techniques, the use of epoxies, and guidance on repair and replacement of chinking and daubing.

Preservation Briefs 27: The Maintenance and Repair of Architectural Cast Iron: Discusses the role of cast iron during our 19th century industrial development, and the resulting advances in building design and technology and ornamental detailing. Provides essential guidance on maintenance and repair with rehabilitation projects.

Preservation Briefs 28: Painting Historic Interiors: Discusses decorative treatments from the late 17th c. to the 1950s. Describes the value of a complete paint investigation for preservation and restoration projects. Cites the common causes of paint failure, and tells how to prepare for repainting.

Preservation Briefs 29: The Repair, Replacement, and Maintenance of Historic Slate Roofs: Describes the causes of slate roof failures and provides guidance on repair and appropriate replacement. Useful Repair/Replacement chart and guideline.

Preservation Briefs 30: The Preservation and Repair of Historic Clay Tile Roofs: Reviews the history of clay roofing tiles and describes their many types and shapes, as well as methods of attachment. Provides guidance on repair and selected replacement.

Preservation Briefs 31: Mothballing Historic Buildings: Describes process of protecting a deteriorating historic building from weather, as well as vandalism when funds are not available to begin a preservation, restoration, or rehabilitation project.

Preservation Briefs 32: Making Historic Properties Accessible: Introduces the complex issue of providing accessibility to historic properties, and the need to balance accessibility and historic preservation. Examples of successful projects included.

Preservation Briefs 33: The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stained and Leaded Glass: Gives a short history of stained and leaded glass in America. Surveys basic preservation and documentation issues and addresses common causes of deterioration. Presents protection, repair, and restoration options.

Preservation Briefs 34: Applied Decoration for Historic Interiors: Preserving Composition Ornament: Details the history, appearance, and characteristics of this uniquely pliable material. Provides guidance on identifying "compo", and suggests appropriate treatments for preservation and restoration projects.

Preservation Briefs 35: Understanding Old Buildings - The Process of Architectural Investigation: Explains architectural investigation as the first critical step in planning appropriate treatment--knowing how a building has changed over time and assessing levels of deterioration. Explains complex investigative processes for the layman.

Preservation Briefs 36: Protecting Cultural Landscapes: Planning, Treatment, and Management: Describes cultural landscapes as special places that reveal aspects of our country's origins and development. Provides a step-by-step process for preserving designed and vernacular landscapes in balance with change.

Preservation Briefs 37: Appropriate Methods of Reducing Lead-Paint Hazards in Historic Housing: Recommends an appropriate methodology for planning and implementing measures to reduce lead-paint hazards while preserving character-defining features. Follows a well-balanced health and safety approach. Includes useful decision-making charts.

Preservation Briefs 38: Removing Graffiti from Historic Masonry: Focuses on cleaning methods that can be used to remove surface-applied graffiti without damaging historic masonry. Emphasizes prompt removal as the key to preventing recurrence, as well as the importance of a carefully planned maintenance program.

Preservation Briefs 39: Holding the Line - Controlling Unwanted Moisture in Historic Buildings: Considers five major sources of moisture--the exterior building envelope, ground infiltration, interior condensation, leaking pipes, and moisture from cleaning or new construction. Provides in-depth guidance on maintenance and repair. Useful charts.

Preservation Briefs 40: Preserving Historic Ceramic Tile Floors: Summarizes the historical use of glazed and unglazed ceramic tiles, and describes different types of floor tiles. Provides useful guidance for maintaining, repairing, cleaning, and applying protective coatings. Includes useful sources for replacement tiles.

Preservation Briefs 41: The Seismic Retrofit of Historic Buildings: Keeping Preservation in the Forefront: Provides information on how earthquakes affect historic buildings, how a historic preservation ethic can guide responsible decisions and methods of seismic retrofit to protect lives and historic properties.
