

# Cleaning Gutters with a Pressure Washer

## Using a Pressure Washer

The spring cleaning ritual is as much a part of the season as baseball, rain showers, and tulips. Tackling winter-weary home exteriors and yards covered with layers of dirt, salt, moss, and mildew is at the top of the spring cleaning to-do list, and timesaving tips and efficient products are key. That's why more and more do-it-yourselfers looking for the right tool to make the job easier and faster choose pressure washers to clean up outdoor dirt.

Pressure washers wash away dirt and grime in a fraction of the time it would take using a traditional hose, bucket, and scrub brush. What is a pressure washer and how does it work? Simply put, a pressure washer combines an electric motor or gas engine with a pump to turn an ordinary garden hose into a high-powered cleaning machine. An injection system adds cleaning solutions to the mix for even more effective cleaning action. In addition, adjustable spray wands allow pressure washers to adapt to different cleaning applications and fixed or rotating brush kits help loosen stubborn dirt.

## Will Gutter Cleaning dislodge my gutters?

A gutter system in good repair is secure and stable enough to use a pressure washer or gutter cleaning tool on without worry of knocking it loose. Over time, the spikes that hold your gutters in place tend will loosen, and using a gutter cleaning wand on loose gutters could indeed pry them loose. Before gutter cleaning, check for loose spikes, drive them back into place. You can also replace them with longer spikes that offer better support. The water pressure from your gutter cleaning wand should clear out dirt and debris, not push the gutters away from the building. Once the gutters are secure, clean the gutters by starting at the downspout and working toward the end of the gutter. Use a snake to clear out clogged gunk from the downspouts, and rinse out with your gutter cleaning tools.

## Troubleshoot your gutters for potential problems

When using gutter cleaning tools, it's a good idea to take the time to troubleshoot your gutters for potential problems. As you clean out gutters with the pressure washer, once your blockages are clear, observe the flow of water from the downspout. Is the water draining away from the building? Does it drain slowly even after the blockage is clean? If you have clean rain gutters but still notice a slow flow of water, readjust your gutters to make them slope toward the downspouts. Some experts recommend one inch per every 20 feet or so. You will notice better drainage with this simple adjustment, and won't mistake a slow-draining gutter problem for a clog. Cleaning gutters is a vital part of good building maintenance, but don't mistake a mis-aligned gutter for a clogged one. Troubleshooting your gutters during gutter cleaning will prevent that from happening next time.