GRAPHIC CABIN

FREE CUSTOMER GUIDE

FloorMetAL™ Life Extension Guide

The tested installation and edge-sealing method Graphic Cabin uses to get years — not months — of service life from pliable aluminum decals on asphalt.

Exclusive to FloorMetAL Customers



Proprietary Method — Not for Redistribution

Your FloorMetAL Life Extension Guide

Thank you for choosing FloorMetAL. This guide contains Graphic Cabin's complete, field-tested installation and edge-sealing method — the exact process our team uses to get the longest possible service life out of a pliable aluminum decal on asphalt. Follow it step by step and you will avoid the two failure modes that account for nearly every premature decal loss we see: incomplete adhesion and moisture intrusion at the edges.

IMPORTANT

Improper installation will cause decal adhesive to fail. Everything in this guide exists to prevent that outcome.

What's Inside

- ✓ The pre-install site checklist that tells you when not to install
- ✓ Which roller to use on smooth vs. heavily textured asphalt
- ✓ Our exact edge-sealing method, with embedded video demonstration
- ✓ The "What Voids the Extended Lifespan" checklist
- ✓ Post-install care for plow zones and freeze-thaw climates

Step 1: Confirm Site Conditions

Do not install if any of the following are true. Waiting a day, a week, or even a season is cheaper than a redo.

- ✗ Ambient air temperature or surface temperature is below 50°F / 10°C
- ✗ The asphalt was paved within the last several weeks — fresh asphalt still off-gasses oils and hasn't fully hardened
- ✗ The install area shows loose rock, raveling, or crumbling edges
- ✗ Rain is forecast within hours, or the surface has been wet within the last day, even if it looks dry now

> **Good to know:** Heavy texture or cracking alone is not a disqualifier — as long as the asphalt is structurally sound, it simply determines which roller you'll use in Step 4.

Surface Condition Reference

GOOD CANDIDATE



Evenly textured, structurally sound asphalt — ideal for a J-roller installation.

NOT SUITABLE



Raveling asphalt with loose aggregate. Patch or repave before decaling.

Step 2: Clean the Surface Completely

1. Remove all loose debris, dirt, and grime with a stiff brush or shop vac.
2. If oil, grime, or buildup is present, spray and wash the area thoroughly.
3. Allow a full dry-out period after washing — do not rush this step.
4. Run a hand across the surface in a few spots, including shaded areas, to confirm it is bone dry, not just dry to the eye.

> **Why it matters:** Trapped moisture beneath the decal is the leading cause of long-term failure. Asphalt texture holds water in shaded or low-airflow voids far longer than it appears on the surface.



Example of adhesion failure resulting from moisture or contamination trapped beneath the decal at install.

Step 3 & 4: Position, Tack, and Roll

Step 3: Position and Tack the Decal

Dry-fit the decal in place before removing any backing. Mark reference points with tape if the layout needs to be precise (e.g., aligned to a parking line or curb). Peel back a small section of the liner, set that edge down first, and work outward slowly to avoid trapping air pockets from the start.

Step 4: Choose the Right Roller for Your Surface

This is the core of Graphic Cabin's tested method — and the single biggest factor separating a decal that lasts one season from one that lasts several years.

Surface Type	Correct Tool	Why
Asphalt in good condition (smooth to lightly textured)	J Roller	Firm, direct pressure fully seats the adhesive on a relatively even surface.
Heavily textured asphalt (deep aggregate, oxidized, alligator pattern)	Foam Roller (e.g., RollePro)	Flexes and conforms into deep texture voids that a rigid J roller would bridge over, leaving hidden air gaps.

Technique

- ✓ Work from the center outward in overlapping passes — never edge-inward, which traps air
- ✓ Apply full, deliberate pressure on every pass
- ✓ On heavily textured sections, go over the same area two or three times, from multiple directions

- ✓ Finish every installation with a final hand-pressure pass across the entire decal

Step 5: Seal the Edges

Edge sealing is the single most under-utilized step in outdoor decal installation — and it's the reason our tested FloorMetAL installations consistently outlast unsealed ones. The exposed edge is the first point of attack for wind-driven rain, snowmelt, and tire-shear stress. Once water finds a way under that edge, it cannot evaporate the way it would on open pavement, and in freeze-thaw climates it expands as it freezes, prying the decal loose from the inside out.



Sealing the perimeter of a FloorMetAL decal with clear, water-based sealant.

Materials Needed

- ✓ DAP Ultra Clear All Purpose Sealant — clear, water-based, flexible, rated for asphalt and aluminum
- ✓ A caulking gun
- ✓ A gloved finger or small tool for tooling the bead
- ✓ A damp cloth for cleanup

Method

1. Confirm the decal has been fully rolled and hand-pressed per Step 4 before sealing.
2. Apply a thin, continuous bead along the full perimeter, half on the aluminum edge and half on the adjoining asphalt.

3. Tool the bead immediately into a smooth, low-profile fillet — a raised ridge creates a catch point for tires and plow blades.
4. Work in small sections (12–18 inches) so the sealant doesn't skin over before tooling.
5. Wipe excess sealant from surrounding asphalt with a damp cloth before it cures.
6. Allow the sealant to cure per manufacturer guidance before exposing the area to standing water or heavy traffic.

Watch: Sealing FloorMetAL Decal Edges

Step-by-step video demonstration of our edge-sealing technique.
youtu.be/XCid3hDVask

Post-Install Care & What Voids Your Extended Lifespan

Step 6: Post-Install Care

- ✓ Avoid driving directly over the decal for the first 24 hours if possible
- ✓ In snow-plow zones, flag the decal's location for the plow operator during the first season
- ✓ Inspect the perimeter seasonally, especially after winter — re-seal any lifting edge promptly

What Voids the Extended Lifespan

- ✕ Installing below 50°F / 10°C
- ✕ Installing on a surface with any residual moisture
- ✕ Skipping the foam roller on heavily textured asphalt and using only a J roller
- ✕ Skipping edge sealing entirely
- ✕ Installing on loose, raveling, or disintegrating asphalt



Moisture-related failure — lifted, delaminated edges where water intruded beneath the adhesive, likely from an unsealed perimeter.

Removal, When the Time Comes

Removal does not require heat. Simply peel off at an angle of less than 45 degrees for the cleanest result. Dispose of the aluminum decal with your metal recycling.

Developed from real-world installs across parking lots, loading docks, and outdoor courts — this is the same method our own installation team follows on every job.

This installation method reflects Graphic Cabin's internal testing and field experience with FloorMetAL pliable aluminum decals on asphalt surfaces. It is provided exclusively to FloorMetAL customers and guide subscribers and is not for redistribution. © Graphic Cabin, graphicabin.com