

NEW BRUNSWICK PAINTING

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# Commercial Painting

Commercial and multi-unit painting, office painting,  
retail spaces, and industrial coating for NB  
businesses

15 Expert Answers from Paint IQ

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## How do commercial painters in New Brunswick handle repainting multi-unit apartment building hallways without displacing tenants?

**Commercial painters in New Brunswick use phased scheduling, low-VOC products, and careful planning to repaint apartment hallways while keeping tenants in their units.** The key is minimizing disruption through strategic timing, proper ventilation, and clear communication with property management and residents.

**Phased Approach and Scheduling** Most experienced commercial painters in NB divide large apartment buildings into sections, completing one hallway or floor at a time. This allows tenants to access their units through alternate routes when possible, or limits disruption to just a few hours per day. Work typically happens during business hours (8 AM to 5 PM) when most tenants are at work, avoiding early morning or evening disruption. For buildings with multiple stairwells, painters often work on one stairwell while keeping the other fully accessible.

The timing also depends on NB's climate. Interior hallway painting happens year-round, but many property managers schedule major repainting during summer months when windows can be opened for ventilation and tenants are more likely to be outdoors. Winter painting requires more careful ventilation planning since windows may stay closed.

**Low-VOC Products and Ventilation** Commercial painters use zero-VOC or low-VOC interior paints specifically to minimize odors and health concerns in occupied buildings. Products like Benjamin Moore Natura, Sherwin-Williams Harmony, or similar commercial-grade low-odor paints are standard. These paints have minimal smell and are safe for occupied spaces, though proper ventilation is still essential.

Professional painters bring portable ventilation fans and coordinate with building management to maximize air circulation through HVAC systems. They often work with building superintendents to temporarily adjust ventilation schedules, bringing in more fresh air during and after painting.

**Tenant Communication and Access Management** Property managers typically notify tenants 48-72 hours in advance, specifying which areas will be painted and when. Painters coordinate with building management to ensure at least one access route to every unit remains available at all times. For single-corridor buildings, work is often done in short sections with frequent breaks to allow tenant passage.

Emergency access is always maintained — painters can quickly move equipment and wet paint warnings if tenants need to evacuate or emergency services need access. Most commercial painters carry liability insurance and WorkSafeNB coverage specifically for occupied building work.

**Surface Preparation Considerations** In occupied buildings, painters minimize dust-generating prep work. They use liquid deglosser instead of sanding when possible, and when sanding is necessary, they use dust collection

systems and plastic sheeting to contain debris. Older apartment buildings in Moncton, Saint John, and Fredericton may have lead paint on hallway trim and doors — professional painters follow lead-safe work practices with containment and HEPA filtration when working on pre-1978 buildings.

**When Professional Help is Essential** Apartment hallway repainting should always be done by commercial painting contractors with experience in occupied buildings. They have the insurance, equipment, and systems to work safely around tenants while maintaining building access and minimizing disruption. DIY or residential painters typically lack the coordination skills and commercial-grade equipment needed for multi-unit projects.

Find commercial painting contractors experienced with multi-unit buildings through the New Brunswick Construction Network directory at [newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=painting](https://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=painting).

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Q2

## Are commercial painting contractors in New Brunswick required to submit a site safety plan to WorkSafeNB before starting a large industrial project?

**Yes, commercial painting contractors working on large industrial projects in New Brunswick are typically required to submit site safety plans to WorkSafeNB**, particularly for projects involving multiple contractors, hazardous materials, or significant fall hazards.

### WorkSafeNB Requirements for Commercial Painting Projects

Under New Brunswick's Occupational Health and Safety Act, painting contractors must comply with specific safety planning requirements depending on the project scope. For large industrial facilities, multi-contractor sites, or projects involving hazardous materials (like lead paint abatement), a comprehensive safety plan is mandatory. This plan must address fall protection for work above 3 metres, respiratory protection for spray painting or hazardous coatings, confined space entry procedures if applicable, and coordination with other trades on site.

The safety plan requirement becomes more stringent when painting involves **lead-based coatings** common in older industrial facilities throughout New Brunswick. Many industrial buildings constructed before 1978 in Saint John's industrial areas, Moncton's rail yards, or pulp and paper facilities in northern NB contain lead paint on structural steel, equipment, and building exteriors. WorkSafeNB requires detailed lead abatement procedures, air monitoring protocols, and worker protection measures that must be documented and approved before work begins.

### Project Thresholds and Documentation

Projects exceeding certain dollar amounts (typically \$75,000+) or involving multiple prime contractors often trigger formal safety plan submission requirements. The plan must include hazard assessments, emergency procedures, training records, and coordination protocols with facility management. For painting work in active industrial facilities - common in NB's forestry, mining, and energy sectors - the safety plan must also address hot work permits for surface preparation, ventilation requirements for enclosed spaces, and lockout/tagout procedures when painting near operational equipment.

### **Practical Implementation**

Professional commercial painting contractors in New Brunswick typically maintain template safety plans that can be customized for specific industrial sites. These contractors understand that WorkSafeNB compliance isn't just regulatory - it's essential for winning contracts with major industrial clients like Irving, Twin Rivers Paper, or NB Power facilities. The safety plan submission process usually occurs 2-4 weeks before project start, allowing time for WorkSafeNB review and any required modifications.

### **When to Hire Professionals with WorkSafeNB Experience**

Any industrial painting project requiring scaffolding, spray application of coatings, or work in active facilities should only be undertaken by contractors with proven WorkSafeNB compliance records and experience with industrial safety planning. These contractors carry appropriate liability insurance, maintain safety certifications, and understand the complex coordination required for industrial painting work in New Brunswick's regulatory environment.

For commercial painting projects requiring WorkSafeNB compliance, find experienced contractors through the New Brunswick Construction Network directory at [newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=painting](https://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=painting).

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Q3

## **What is the best anti-graffiti coating for a commercial building exterior in a high-traffic area of Fredericton or Saint John?**

**Anti-graffiti coatings are essential for commercial buildings in downtown Fredericton and Saint John's port district, where graffiti vandalism is common.** The best options are sacrificial coatings that allow easy graffiti removal without damaging the underlying surface, though the choice depends on your building material and maintenance budget.

**Sacrificial anti-graffiti coatings** are the most effective and economical choice for most NB commercial applications. These create a clear protective barrier that can be pressure-washed or chemically stripped to remove

graffiti, then reapplied. Products like **Graffiti Shield by Protective Coatings** or **Anti-Graffiti Coating by Rust-Mort** cost \$45-65 per gallon and cover 200-300 square feet per gallon depending on surface porosity. On brick, concrete block, or stucco buildings common in downtown Saint John and Fredericton, these coatings typically last 8-15 graffiti removal cycles before requiring complete reapplication.

**Semi-permanent coatings** like **Elephant Guard AG** or **Graffiti Buster** cost more upfront (\$75-120 per gallon) but allow 20-50 cleaning cycles. These work particularly well on smooth surfaces like painted metal siding, precast concrete panels, or painted masonry. The higher initial cost pays off on buildings that experience frequent tagging.

**New Brunswick's climate considerations** are critical for anti-graffiti coating success. Maritime humidity and freeze-thaw cycles stress these protective films. Apply coatings only during dry conditions between May and September, with temperatures above 15°C and humidity below 70%. The salt air in Saint John's port area can accelerate coating breakdown, so expect to reapply sacrificial coatings annually in coastal locations versus every 18-24 months inland in Fredericton.

**Surface preparation is absolutely critical** — anti-graffiti coatings will only bond as well as the underlying surface. Clean all existing graffiti completely using appropriate solvents or pressure washing. On porous masonry (common in older Fredericton and Saint John commercial buildings), seal the surface first with a penetrating masonry sealer to prevent the anti-graffiti coating from soaking in and becoming ineffective.

**Application technique matters significantly.** These coatings must be applied in thin, even layers — typically two coats with proper cure time between. Thick application creates an uneven surface that's harder to clean and more likely to peel. Most commercial applications require spray application for uniform coverage on large wall areas.

**Maintenance planning is essential** for long-term effectiveness. Remove graffiti within 24-48 hours when possible — the longer paint or markers sit, the deeper they penetrate. Keep removal solvents and pressure washing equipment readily available. Document each cleaning cycle to track coating performance and plan reapplication timing.

**Professional application is strongly recommended** for commercial anti-graffiti projects. The surface prep, proper mixing ratios, environmental controls, and spray application technique significantly impact performance. A poorly applied coating may actually make graffiti removal harder than on an unprotected surface.

For high-visibility commercial buildings in downtown cores, the investment in quality anti-graffiti protection pays for itself quickly compared to repeated sandblasting, repainting, or surface replacement. Find commercial painting contractors experienced with anti-graffiti systems through the New Brunswick Construction Network directory at [newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=painting](http://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=painting).

## How do I choose the right paint sheen for a New Brunswick healthcare facility waiting room that needs frequent sanitizing?

For a healthcare facility waiting room in New Brunswick that requires frequent sanitizing, you need **semi-gloss or satin acrylic latex paint specifically formulated for high-traffic commercial applications**. These sheens provide the durability and cleanability essential for healthcare environments while maintaining an appropriate professional appearance.

**Semi-gloss is your best choice for maximum cleanability** — it can withstand repeated cleaning with hospital-grade disinfectants, bleach solutions, and alcohol-based sanitizers without breaking down or losing its protective barrier. The slightly reflective surface makes it easy to spot contamination and ensures thorough cleaning. However, semi-gloss will highlight any wall imperfections, so your drywall prep needs to be flawless.

**Satin offers a good compromise** between cleanability and appearance if your walls have minor imperfections or if you want a softer, less institutional look. Quality satin paints like Benjamin Moore Regal Select or Sherwin-Williams ProClassic can handle frequent cleaning while providing a more residential feel that may help reduce patient anxiety.

**Avoid flat, eggshell, or matte finishes entirely** in healthcare settings — they absorb moisture and contaminants, cannot be properly sanitized, and will show permanent staining from cleaning products. Even "washable" flat paints are not suitable for healthcare facilities where true sanitization is required.

**Choose 100% acrylic latex paint** rather than alkyd or oil-based products. Acrylics resist yellowing under fluorescent lighting (common in healthcare facilities), dry faster for quicker room turnover, and have lower VOCs — important in a space where patients with respiratory conditions may be present. In New Brunswick's variable humidity conditions, acrylics also resist cracking and maintain their flexibility better than oil-based alternatives.

**Consider antimicrobial paint additives** or paints with built-in antimicrobial properties. Products like Benjamin Moore's Paint with Germ Guard or similar antimicrobial coatings provide an extra layer of protection between cleanings. While these shouldn't replace proper sanitization protocols, they can help reduce microbial growth on painted surfaces.

**Color selection matters for maintenance** — light colors show dust and fingerprints but make it easier to spot contamination for cleaning. Medium tones in neutral colors (soft grays, warm beiges) hide minor soil while still allowing staff to see when cleaning is needed. Avoid pure white, which shows every mark, and dark colors, which can make spaces feel smaller and may hide contamination.

**Plan for NB's dry winter conditions** when specifying paint. Healthcare facilities with forced-air heating systems become very dry in winter (often below 30% humidity), which can cause lower-quality paints to become brittle and crack. This creates crevices where contaminants can hide — another reason to invest in premium acrylic latex paint.

**This is definitely a job for commercial painting professionals** with healthcare facility experience. They understand infection control requirements, can work around patient schedules, carry proper insurance including liability coverage, and know which products meet healthcare standards. Commercial painters also have the spray equipment necessary to achieve the smooth, even finish that's essential for proper sanitization in healthcare environments.

Find experienced commercial painting contractors through the New Brunswick Construction Network who specialize in healthcare facilities and understand the unique requirements of medical environments.

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Q5

## **Can a warehouse in Fredericton be painted in winter and what temperature controls are needed for the paint to cure properly?**

**Yes, a warehouse in Fredericton can absolutely be painted in winter, but proper temperature control is critical for paint curing and long-term durability.** Unlike residential exteriors which are impossible to paint in NB winters, warehouses offer the controlled environment needed for successful winter painting projects.

### **Temperature Requirements for Paint Curing**

Most commercial-grade paints require a minimum application temperature of 10°C (50°F) and need to stay above 7°C (45°F) during the entire curing process. For latex paints, the curing window extends 24-48 hours after application, while oil-based and epoxy coatings may need temperature control for up to a week. In an unheated Fredericton warehouse where January temperatures can drop to -20°C or lower, temporary heating is absolutely essential.

The challenge isn't just application temperature — it's maintaining consistent temperatures during curing. Paint that freezes before fully curing will fail catastrophically, leading to poor adhesion, cracking, and premature failure. Even if the paint doesn't freeze, temperatures below 7°C slow the curing process dramatically, potentially leaving the coating vulnerable for weeks.

### **Heating Solutions for Winter Warehouse Painting**

**Temporary propane or diesel heaters** are the most common solution for warehouse painting in NB winters. For a typical warehouse project, you'll need enough BTU capacity to maintain 15-20°C throughout the space — figure roughly 40-50 BTU per square foot of floor area in an uninsulated building during Fredericton's winter conditions. Multiple smaller heaters provide better heat distribution than one large unit.

**Infrared heaters** work well for spot heating specific areas being painted, allowing you to work in sections rather than heating the entire warehouse. This approach saves fuel costs but requires careful scheduling to ensure each painted section stays warm through its full cure cycle.

**Ventilation is crucial** when using temporary heaters — you need fresh air exchange to remove paint vapors and combustion gases, but not so much that you lose all your heated air. Professional painting contractors often use a combination of intake fans and exhaust fans to maintain air quality while preserving temperature.

### **Humidity Control Considerations**

Winter heating can create extremely dry conditions (below 20% relative humidity), which actually helps paint cure faster but can cause issues with spray application — the paint may start drying before it hits the surface, creating a rough texture. Conversely, if the warehouse has moisture infiltration from snow or ice, you may need dehumidification to prevent condensation on freshly painted surfaces.

### **When to Hire a Professional**

Commercial warehouse painting in winter requires specialized equipment, insurance coverage, and WorkSafeNB compliance that most property owners don't have. Professional contractors have portable heating systems, proper ventilation equipment, and experience managing temperature control throughout the curing process. They also carry the liability insurance essential for commercial projects and understand the safety requirements for working with temporary heating in industrial spaces.

For large warehouse projects, the cost of renting heating equipment, managing fuel consumption, and ensuring proper ventilation often makes professional contractors more cost-effective than attempting a DIY approach. Find commercial painting contractors experienced with winter warehouse projects through the New Brunswick Construction Network directory at [newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=painting](https://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=painting).

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Q6

## What do I need to know about hiring a commercial painting contractor in New Brunswick?

**Hiring a commercial painting contractor in New Brunswick requires more due diligence than a residential project — you need to verify WorkSafeNB coverage, commercial liability insurance, proof of relevant experience, and a clear contract that addresses access scheduling, surface preparation scope, and warranty terms.** Commercial painting mistakes are costly and can disrupt your business, so the up-front vetting matters.

The first thing to confirm is WorkSafeNB coverage. Any contractor doing work for your New Brunswick business must have valid WorkSafeNB assessment coverage, period. Ask for a WorkSafeNB clearance certificate before work starts — this is not optional. If a worker is injured on your property and the contractor isn't covered, the liability can fall back on you as the property owner or business. Alongside WorkSafeNB, ask for a certificate of commercial general liability insurance. For most commercial painting projects, you want to see at least million in liability coverage.

**Experience with commercial work matters.** Residential painting and commercial painting involve different challenges — larger open areas requiring spray equipment, tighter schedules to avoid business disruption, compliance with occupancy requirements, and sometimes work at height that requires proper fall protection and scaffolding. Ask specifically whether the contractor has done commercial projects of similar size and type. A painter who is excellent at residential houses but has never done a multi-floor office building or a restaurant kitchen is not your best bet for a complex commercial job.

Get a detailed written quote — not just a ballpark number, but a scope-of-work document that specifies the surfaces to be painted, the number of coats, the products to be used, the prep work included (cleaning, filling, caulking, priming), and the schedule. The quote should also address how the contractor will protect your furnishings, floors, equipment, and inventory, and what their process is for post-job cleanup. Ambiguity in a commercial painting contract creates disputes later.

**Scheduling and access** are often the most complex part of a commercial painting project in NB. Retail and restaurant spaces typically require after-hours or weekend work to avoid disrupting customers. Office buildings can sometimes be phased, painting one floor or wing at a time. Confirm that the contractor has experience working around live business operations and has a realistic schedule that accounts for drying and recoat times — rushing a commercial paint job to minimize downtime often leads to poor results.

For commercial painting in heritage-designated buildings in downtown Saint John or Fredericton, ask whether the contractor is familiar with the city's heritage requirements around exterior colour changes. These areas have specific approval processes that need to be completed before exterior work begins.

Finally, ask for references from commercial clients — not just residential customers. Call those references and ask specifically about the contractor's punctuality, communication, and how they handled any issues that came up during the project. New Brunswick Painting can help connect you with commercial painting contractors who have the appropriate coverage and commercial experience through the New Brunswick Construction Network.

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## How much does it cost to paint a small office or retail space in Moncton or Fredericton?

**Commercial interior painting for a small office or retail space in Moncton or Fredericton typically costs \$2-4 per square foot of wall area for office environments and \$3-5 per square foot for retail spaces.** For a 1,000 square foot office, that translates to **\$2,000-4,000** depending on ceiling height, number of coats, surface condition, and layout complexity.

The price difference between office and retail work reflects scheduling constraints and finish expectations. Retail spaces almost always require evening or weekend work to avoid disrupting business hours — that after-hours scheduling adds 20-35% to the base labour cost.

**Factors that move the price** include: ceiling height (standard 8-9 ft versus 10-14 ft ceilings found in heritage commercial buildings in downtown Fredericton), number of colours and accent walls, condition of existing walls, whether trim and doors are included, and the number of coats required.

**Material costs for commercial interiors** are similar to residential: quality commercial-grade interior paints run \$40-65/gallon. Commercial spaces with high traffic should use a **satin or semi-gloss eggshell finish** for scrubbability.

Labour rates for commercial painting in NB run \$35-55/hour per painter, with commercial jobs typically using 2-3 person crews. Most commercial painters quote as a fixed project price.

For rough budgeting: a 1,000 sq ft open-plan office with standard ceilings is **\$2,000-3,500**. A 1,500 sq ft retail space with accent walls and off-hours work is **\$5,000-8,500**.

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## What type of paint is best for a commercial kitchen or restaurant in New Brunswick?

**Commercial kitchens and restaurants in New Brunswick require paint that can withstand high heat, steam, grease, and frequent scrubbing — which means a high-quality epoxy or acrylic-alkyd semi-gloss or gloss finish on walls, and often an epoxy coating for floors.** Standard interior latex paint will fail quickly in a kitchen environment.

The cooking area of a commercial kitchen creates a uniquely punishing environment for paint: grease vapour condenses on walls and ceiling surfaces, steam from pots and dishwashers creates high humidity, temperatures near cooking equipment fluctuate dramatically, and cleaning staff regularly scrub walls with commercial degreasers and disinfectants that degrade lower-grade paints. In this environment, **epoxy paint** is the industry standard for walls and ceilings in food preparation areas.

Two-part epoxy coatings (such as those from Sherwin-Williams, Benjamin Moore, or specialty commercial coating suppliers) cure to a rock-hard, non-porous film that resists grease absorption, is impermeable to moisture, and can be scrubbed repeatedly with harsh cleaners without losing its integrity. The cost is higher — two-part epoxy systems run 0-120 per litre and require mixing, careful temperature control during application, and professional spray application to achieve a smooth finish. But the longevity and cleanability make the investment worthwhile in any food service setting. Expect to repaint a commercial kitchen with a standard latex every 2-3 years under heavy use; a good epoxy system can last 8-12 years.

For areas of the restaurant **outside the kitchen** — the dining room, server stations, bar, and waiting area — you have more flexibility. High-quality commercial latex paints in eggshell or satin finish from Sherwin-Williams ProMar 400, Benjamin Moore Ultra Spec, or Dulux commercial lines are durable, washable, and available in the full colour range. These hold up well to the humidity and traffic of a dining room and are much easier to spot-repair and touch up than epoxy. A semi-gloss finish on the lower portion of dining room walls (below chair rail height) adds extra scrubability where chairs bump into the walls.

**Colour selection** in a restaurant environment also follows practical rules. Very light colours (pure white, very pale tints) show grease splatters and scuffs quickly in kitchen areas. Medium tones and warm neutrals in dining areas tend to hold up visually better between repaints. If your restaurant has an exposed-brick or concrete aesthetic — common in downtown Moncton's heritage commercial buildings — a clear or tinted masonry sealer keeps the character of the material while making the surface easier to clean.

New Brunswick's older commercial building stock (particularly in downtown Saint John, Fredericton's Queen Street area, and Moncton's heritage blocks) often has plaster walls and older coatings that need specific preparation

before a commercial kitchen coating will adhere properly. A professional assessment is worth doing before specifying the paint system.

For any commercial kitchen or food service painting project, hire a contractor with commercial painting experience who understands the specific product systems and application requirements. This is not a DIY project.

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Q9

## **Do commercial painting contractors in NB need special WorkSafeNB coverage and insurance?**

**Yes — commercial painting contractors working in New Brunswick are required to have WorkSafeNB employer assessment coverage, and you as the business owner or property manager should always ask for a clearance certificate before allowing work to begin on your property.** Beyond WorkSafeNB, commercial liability insurance and appropriate fall-protection training are also expected for any reputable commercial contractor.

WorkSafeNB is New Brunswick's workers' compensation authority. Under the Workers' Compensation Act (NB), most businesses engaged in commercial activity — including painting contractors — must be registered with WorkSafeNB and maintain their employer assessment account in good standing. This coverage protects workers if they are injured on the job: it pays their lost wages and medical costs without the need for litigation. From your perspective as the property or business owner, hiring a contractor without WorkSafeNB coverage exposes you to potential liability if a worker is hurt on your site — in some circumstances, the uninsured cost of the claim can be passed back to you.

**Getting a clearance certificate is simple.** Before work starts, ask the contractor to provide a WorkSafeNB clearance certificate. The contractor can request this directly from WorkSafeNB online, and it confirms their account is in good standing. This is standard practice in the commercial construction and trades industry in NB and any legitimate contractor will have no hesitation providing it.

**Commercial general liability (CGL) insurance** is separate from WorkSafeNB and equally important. A CGL policy protects you and the contractor if the work causes property damage or a third-party injury — for example, if paint overspray damages customer property, or a ladder falls through a window. For commercial painting, million in liability coverage is the typical minimum. Ask to be listed as an additional insured on the contractor's policy for the duration of the project, and ask for a certificate of insurance naming your business.

For larger commercial projects — particularly those involving work at height above 3 metres, scaffold erection, or spray painting in occupied spaces — WorkSafeNB's OH&S regulations require specific fall protection plans, respirator programs, and safety training for workers. A professional commercial painting contractor operating in NB will have these programs in place. If a contractor seems unfamiliar with height safety requirements or can't describe their fall protection approach, that's a significant red flag.

For specialized scopes like lead paint encapsulation or abatement in older NB commercial buildings, additional training and containment protocols are required under Health Canada guidelines. Any commercial building constructed before 1978 should be assessed for lead paint before painting or renovation work begins — and the contractor must follow lead-safe work practices.

The short answer: verify WorkSafeNB clearance, get a certificate of liability insurance, and confirm the contractor has appropriate fall protection and safety training in place before any commercial painting project begins in New Brunswick.

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## How do I schedule commercial painting in my NB business to minimize downtime and disruption?

**The key to minimizing downtime during a commercial painting project in New Brunswick is phased scheduling — dividing the space into sections and painting each section sequentially, or using after-hours and weekend blocks so the work never overlaps with your peak business hours.** Good planning, clear communication with your contractor, and realistic timelines make the difference between a smooth project and a chaotic one.

Start by mapping your space and identifying which areas absolutely cannot be offline at the same time. In a retail environment, your cash desk area, stockroom access, and main entrance are critical — you can't shut all three down simultaneously. In an office, the server room or reception desk might be your pinch points. Walk through the space with your painting contractor before finalizing the schedule and flag these areas explicitly. A good commercial painter has done this exercise many times and can suggest a logical phasing sequence.

**After-hours and weekend scheduling** is the most common approach for occupied businesses in Moncton and Fredericton. Most professional commercial painters in NB are accustomed to this — they show up after closing, paint through the evening or overnight, and the space is ready when staff arrives the next morning. For this to work well, latex paint drying times need to be respected: most modern commercial interior latex paints are dry to the touch in 1-2 hours and ready for re-occupancy in 2-4 hours if ventilation is adequate. Your contractor should confirm specific dry and recoat times for the products they're using, especially if you're in a high-humidity NB summer when drying times can stretch.

**Ventilation** is a critical scheduling consideration. Commercial painting generates VOC fumes even with low-VOC products, and enclosed spaces need adequate air movement during and after painting. Build ventilation time into the schedule — typically 2-4 hours of active ventilation after painting before the space is occupied, longer for oil-based or specialty coatings. If your building's HVAC system will be running, discuss with your contractor how to prevent paint vapour from being drawn into supply air — temporary isolation of painted zones from the HVAC return may be needed.

Communicate clearly with your staff, customers, and tenants about what areas are being painted and when. Even a short notice to regular customers that part of your space will be freshly painted next week prevents complaints and manages expectations. For multi-tenant commercial buildings in NB, you'll also need to notify the property manager and possibly adjacent tenants if odours or noise are a concern.

**Build buffer time into your project timeline.** NB's climate matters even for interior commercial painting in summer — if humidity in an un-air-conditioned building climbs above 70%, drying times slow significantly and

recoat windows stretch. A job that seems like a 3-day schedule can easily become 4-5 days if the weather isn't cooperative. Your contractor should have this contingency built into their quote and timeline.

For a smooth commercial painting project, designate one point-of-contact person on your team who has authority to answer contractor questions quickly. Delays waiting for decisions add cost and drag out the schedule. New Brunswick Painting can match your business with experienced commercial painting contractors in Moncton, Fredericton, Saint John, and across NB who are set up for after-hours and phased commercial work.

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**Q11**

## **What paint is best for high-traffic commercial hallways and stairwells in a Moncton building?**

**For high-traffic commercial hallways and stairwells, you need a hard-wearing, washable finish — specifically a 100% acrylic latex paint in a semi-gloss or satin sheen, applied over a quality bonding primer.** Products like Benjamin Moore Aura or Sherwin-Williams Duration Home in a satin or semi-gloss finish are the go-to choice for Moncton commercial properties that see constant foot traffic, scuffs, and cleaning.

The reason sheen matters so much in these spaces is durability and maintenance. Flat or matte paints absorb scuffs, marks, and moisture into the surface — once they're there, you can't wipe them off without damaging the paint film. Satin and semi-gloss finishes cure to a harder surface that can be scrubbed with a damp cloth repeatedly without wearing away. In a busy hallway or stairwell that gets cleaned weekly, this difference translates into years of extended paint life.

For the walls themselves, satin is the most popular commercial choice — it's durable enough for regular cleaning but doesn't show every surface imperfection the way full gloss does. Semi-gloss is ideal for doors, door frames, handrails, baseboards, and any trim elements in these spaces, as it handles the hardest abrasion zones best. If your Moncton building has older drywall or plaster walls that are a bit rough, satin will be more forgiving visually than semi-gloss.

**NB-specific considerations:** Many commercial buildings in Moncton — particularly those along Main Street and in the downtown core — are older buildings with plaster or older drywall that may have been painted dozens of times. Before selecting your paint, assess the existing surface. Multiple old paint layers can be brittle, and a fresh coat without proper prep will peel within a year. Commercial spaces also tend to have higher humidity from HVAC systems, people traffic, and cleaning — another reason to avoid flat paint and choose products formulated for moisture resistance.

**Practical tips:** Apply a bonding primer before your topcoats if the existing surface is glossy or you're making a significant colour change. For commercial stairwells, consider a more durable anti-scuff product — Sherwin-Williams Emerald or Benjamin Moore Scuff-X are specifically engineered to resist the kind of marks that walls in busy stairwells accumulate from bags, equipment, and hand contact. Use a 10mm (3/8-inch) roller nap for smooth walls and apply two full coats for proper film build.

Hiring a professional painter for commercial hallways and stairwells is almost always the right call. Access issues, the need to work around building occupants, proper drop cloths and containment in active spaces, and the volume of wall area involved make this a job that benefits from experienced commercial painters with the right equipment and WorkSafeNB coverage. New Brunswick Painting can match you with local Moncton commercial painters for a free estimate.

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## How often should a commercial building exterior be repainted in New Brunswick?

**Most commercial building exteriors in New Brunswick need repainting every 5 to 10 years, depending on the siding material, paint quality, building exposure, and the severity of the Maritime climate at that location.** A well-prepared, professionally painted wood or fibre cement exterior using a premium 100% acrylic latex can realistically last 7 to 10 years. Poorly prepped surfaces or mid-range paint on a coastal or exposed location may start showing failure in 4 to 5 years.

New Brunswick's climate is one of the harshest in Canada for exterior paint. The combination of 100-plus freeze-thaw cycles per year, high Maritime humidity (especially in Saint John, Shediac, and coastal communities), salt air from the Bay of Fundy, and intense UV radiation on south- and west-facing walls all work together to degrade exterior paint films faster than in most other provinces. A building that would last 10 years between repaints in southern Ontario might need attention at the 6 or 7-year mark in New Brunswick.

**Material matters enormously.** Wood clapboard and cedar shingle siding — common in older NB commercial buildings in Fredericton's downtown and Saint John's historic district — absorbs and releases moisture seasonally, which causes paint to flex and eventually crack. These surfaces need repainting more frequently than fibre cement or aluminum. Metal surfaces like steel doors, flashings, and railings can rust through degraded paint quickly in NB's salt-humid climate and should be inspected annually. Brick and masonry exteriors are typically painted less frequently (every 10-15 years) but need careful moisture assessment before each repaint, as moisture trapped under masonry paint causes spalling.

**Watch for these early warning signs** rather than waiting for a fixed interval: chalking (a white powdery residue when you rub the wall), fading beyond what you'd accept visually, cracking or alligating of the paint film, peeling or bubbling near joints and trim, or visible mildew/algae growth on north-facing walls. Any of these signs mean it's time to repaint — waiting longer allows moisture into the substrate and turns a paint job into a repair-and-paint job, which costs significantly more.

**Practical tips:** The best time to schedule a commercial repaint in NB is spring (May to June) or early fall (August to September). Avoid July and August if your building is south-facing and sun-exposed — application in direct hot sun causes flash-drying that reduces paint adhesion and durability. Always get a professional assessment before scheduling the work, as the painter needs to evaluate whether the existing paint film is in good enough condition to accept a new topcoat, or whether surface prep and priming will add significantly to the project scope and cost.

For a commercial building repaint in NB, hiring a licensed and WorkSafeNB-covered commercial painting contractor is essential — not just for quality but for liability and insurance purposes. Browse commercial painters through the

New Brunswick Construction Network directory at [newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=painting](http://newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com/directory?trade=painting).

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## What are the safety requirements for painting the exterior of a multi-storey commercial building in NB?

**Painting the exterior of a multi-storey commercial building in New Brunswick requires compliance with WorkSafeNB regulations for working at heights, including proper fall protection, scaffolding standards, and hazardous material handling — this is not DIY territory and must be performed by qualified commercial painting contractors with appropriate coverage and training.**

WorkSafeNB regulations require fall protection for any work performed at heights above 3 metres (approximately 10 feet) — which means virtually any multi-storey exterior painting project. The required fall protection system depends on the working method. For scaffold-based painting, the scaffolding must be erected and inspected by a competent person, comply with the applicable sections of the NB Occupational Health and Safety Act, and have guardrails, toe boards, and access ladders installed correctly. For swing-stage work on taller buildings, additional requirements apply including anchoring systems, lifelines, and harnesses that meet WorkSafeNB standards.

**Scaffolding safety** is the most critical element of multi-storey exterior painting in NB. Scaffolding must be erected on stable, level ground — which can be challenging on older commercial sites in Saint John and Fredericton where the ground around heritage buildings is uneven. All scaffolding must be capable of supporting at least four times the anticipated load, including painters, materials, and equipment. In NB's weather, scaffolding must also be monitored and secured against wind loading — Maritime windstorms are common and can collapse improperly secured scaffolding.

**Lead paint is a major safety concern** for older commercial buildings in New Brunswick. Buildings constructed before 1978 very commonly have lead-based paint on exterior surfaces, particularly on trim, window frames, and metal elements. WorkSafeNB and Health Canada guidelines require that lead paint disturbance (scraping, sanding, heat gun removal) be performed with proper containment, wet suppression methods to minimize dust, and respiratory protection (P100 respirators). Waste containing lead paint debris must be disposed of in compliance with NB environmental regulations. Any contractor you hire for an older commercial building repaint should assess for lead paint before starting and have lead-safe work practice procedures in place.

**Practical tips for building owners:** Before hiring a commercial painting contractor for multi-storey exterior work, verify that the contractor carries commercial general liability insurance (minimum million is standard in NB), WorkSafeNB employer coverage, and can provide their safety plan for the project. Ask specifically whether they will assess for lead paint and what their lead-safe work procedure is. Get the safety plan in writing before work begins.

For exterior work on any building above two storeys, professional commercial painters are not just recommended — they are essentially required by NB safety law. New Brunswick Painting can help connect you with commercial

painters who carry the appropriate WorkSafeNB coverage and safety training for your project.

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**Q14**

## **What is the cost to paint an apartment building common areas including hallways and lobby in Fredericton?**

**Painting the common areas of an apartment building in Fredericton — including hallways, stairwells, and the lobby — typically runs \$5,000-25,000+ depending on the number of floors, the square footage of wall and ceiling area, surface condition, and space complexity.**

Professional painters price this work at **\$2-4 per square foot of paintable surface**. A typical apartment building floor with two 40-foot corridors and a central stairwell landing has roughly 600-900 square feet of paintable surface per floor. A 4-storey building has \$5,000-14,000 of surface to cover.

**The lobby is a different animal than the hallways.** Lobbies often have higher ceilings (9-12 feet in Fredericton's older apartment buildings), more complex cut-in work around mailboxes and intercom panels, and sometimes receive a higher-quality finish. Budget an additional **\$1,500-5,000** for a medium-sized apartment lobby.

**Surface condition significantly drives cost on older Fredericton buildings.** Apartment hallways accumulate years of scuffs and impact damage. Lead paint is a real possibility in pre-1978 buildings and must be addressed with lead-safe work practices.

**Scheduling and logistics** are a major cost driver. Work must be done in phases so residents always have access to exit stairwells, and typically needs to be completed during low-traffic hours.

For product selection, **commercial-grade scrubbable paints** are essential — eggshell or low-sheen in corridors, semi-gloss on stairwell walls. A \$65/gallon commercial-grade washable paint versus a \$40 standard latex means substantially longer intervals between repaints.

Get at least 3 quotes from commercial painting contractors with specific apartment building experience.

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**Q15**

## **How do VOC regulations affect commercial painting projects in New Brunswick?**

**VOC (volatile organic compound) regulations in Canada set maximum allowable VOC content for architectural coatings sold and used in New Brunswick, and all paints commercially available in NB must comply — so in practice, the products on the shelf at your local paint store are already within legal limits.**

What VOC regulations mean for your commercial project is more about understanding what you're using and how to protect occupants and workers, rather than navigating a complex permit process.

Environment and Climate Change Canada sets national VOC limits under the Volatile Organic Compound Concentration Limits for Architectural Coatings Regulations. These limits vary by coating type — flat interior paints are limited to 50 g/L of VOCs, non-flat interior paints to 150 g/L, and specialty products like stains, varnishes, and primers have their own category limits. Oil-based and alkyd coatings, even when compliant, still have significantly higher VOC content than modern water-based acrylics. Many premium commercial paint lines now offer zero-VOC or ultra-low-VOC formulations (under 5 g/L), which is the appropriate specification for painting occupied commercial or residential spaces.

**For commercial projects in New Brunswick, VOC levels have significant practical implications beyond regulatory compliance.** In occupied buildings — apartment hallways, office spaces, retail areas, schools, and healthcare facilities — high-VOC paints cause strong odours that can affect tenants, customers, and employees for days or even weeks after application. This isn't just unpleasant; it's a liability issue for building owners. Specifying low-VOC or zero-VOC products in your painting contract is standard practice for any reputable commercial painter working in occupied spaces in NB. WorkSafeNB also requires adequate ventilation when applying any coating with significant VOC content to protect painters' health.

**From a cost perspective,** low-VOC and zero-VOC commercial paints in NB cost roughly the same as standard formulations. Benjamin Moore's Natura (zero-VOC), Sherwin-Williams Harmony, and Dulux Lifemaster Pro are all zero-VOC options available in NB that perform comparably to their higher-VOC counterparts for most commercial applications. The performance gap between conventional and low-VOC paints that existed 15 years ago has largely closed — you're not sacrificing durability or coverage by specifying low-VOC on your commercial project.

**Practical tips:** When reviewing quotes from commercial painters, ask specifically about the VOC content of the proposed products, especially if you're managing an occupied building. Request Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for any specialty coatings being applied — these list the exact VOC content. For any project involving old oil-based paints being coated over (common in older Fredericton and Saint John commercial buildings), discuss ventilation requirements and off-hours scheduling with your contractor, as cutting and abrading old oil-based paint surfaces generates more solvent vapour than painting over existing latex. Ensure the contractor has a ventilation plan for enclosed spaces like stairwells.

For large commercial painting projects with specific VOC requirements — healthcare facilities, schools, food service spaces — always work with a contractor experienced in these environments and familiar with any sector-specific indoor air quality guidelines that may apply beyond the general national VOC regulations.

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