Axalta Coating

Choosing the perfect cabinet for your new kitchen can be a difficult process. There are many choices when it comes to styles, colors, and finish type. Knowing you plan to spend a significant amount, we want to insure you have a complete understanding about what’s available and what to expect from your new cabinets.

In some cases, painted wood cabinets will show cracking at the seams after several months of use. The coating used to “finish” the cabinets cures and adheres well to the wood. The wood separates from itself and the coating cracks at the seams on both the boxes and the door panel. These 'cracks' may be more noticeable on 5 piece "stile and rail' type doors.

The reason is real wood will expand and contract with changes in humidity levels. This expansion and contraction is a natural phenomenon common for most wood species. Since cabinetry doors are comprised of multiple pieces of wood, and the grain running in different directions, these boards expand and contract at different rates. This movement is called humidification and can be quite extreme, depending on several factors. The most impactful factor is your local climate. The higher the humidity in the area, the more susceptible wood is to movement due to humidification. A common way to mitigate that climate factor is the HVAC system in your home.

Another common reason the seams crack is allowing water to sit on the cabinets themselves. The cabinets and coating systems are built to withstand moisture exposure for short periods of time. Not removing water or other liquids immediately can lead to damage caused by moisture getting into the wood.

What to do?

There are a few things that can be done to lessen the cracking or at least make the cracks less noticeable.

* Keep moisture levels low in the house minimizing the likelihood of humidification causing wood movement
* Remove all liquids that are spilled or splashed on any cabinet surface
* Choose a stained finish rather than a painted finish; the cracking is less noticeable
* Choose a solid MDF door, there are no pieces that will separate and cause cracking