01 / PRICE WITH A PLAN

Pressure Washing Business Pricing Guide

Area is one input in a pressure washing quote. Surface condition, method, access, preparation, and cleanup can change the work enough to make a simple area rate misleading.

Four things to include in your quote

- Surface: type, condition, suitability, and the method you are qualified to use.
- Access: water arrangements, hose runs, obstacles, and nearby property.
- Total time: inspection, travel, setup, preparation, washing, and cleanup.
- Costs: operating supplies, transport, equipment wear, and allocated overhead.

Keep the offer clear

Inspect before quoting and state exactly which surfaces and tasks are included. Set a minimum job charge based on the cost of making a visit worthwhile. Agree on preparation, cleanup, and extra work in advance.

A useful starting principle

Plan to cover job costs, all labor time, and a share of overhead, then decide what profit allowance your business needs. Check whether customers value the offer at that price. If the numbers do not work, revisit the scope or process rather than guessing lower.

02 / TEST YOUR ASSUMPTIONS

A simple planning example

Example only: a small job takes 45 minutes of washing plus 75 minutes of travel, setup, and cleanup. At a $30 hourly planning rate, 2 labor hours = $60. Add $20 job costs and $20 allocated overhead: $100 cost coverage before any additional profit allowance.

Three pricing mistakes to avoid

- Do not price only the minutes spent washing.
- Do not apply one area rate to every surface and condition.
- Do not accept work beyond your skills because the quote looks profitable.

Review after real jobs

Record preparation and cleanup separately from washing time. Compare estimated and actual costs before changing your minimum charge or area rates.

Use these examples to understand the calculation, not as market rates. Your costs, skills, demand, and local requirements will differ. No price or income result is guaranteed.

Continue with the practical decision guide and worksheet on the next pages.

Turn scope into a defensible quote

Work through the decision

Select a narrow service and surfaces you are trained to handle. Method suitability and property protection matter more than equipment power alone. Separate inspection, preparation, washing, and cleanup so each is included in both scheduling and pricing.

Build the quote from total person-hours, direct costs, and allocated overhead. Select either a fixed profit allowance or an explicitly defined margin method. Check payment fees and taxes separately where applicable. Assess surface type and condition, water access, obstacles, nearby property, access limits, and how runoff will be handled. Decline or refer unsuitable work instead of treating every job as the same area-rate calculation. Learn the relevant operating procedures before accepting paid work.

A situation to learn from

Illustrative calculation: three total labor hours at $25 per hour = $75 planned labor; $15 direct costs and $10 allocated overhead bring cost coverage to $100. A $20 fixed allowance produces $120. That is a 20% markup on cost coverage but a 16.67% margin on revenue; a 20% margin would require $125 before excluded fees or sales taxes.

How to respond

Illustrative pilot: a small surface took 45 minutes to wash but another 75 minutes for travel, setup, preparation, and cleanup. Pricing only the washing time missed most labor. Record all stages and use a minimum charge based on the actual visit cost. Compare quote assumptions with actual jobs. If time or costs differ repeatedly, revise the assessment questions, scope, or pricing method. A competitor's advertised figure does not establish whether your costs are covered or the scope is comparable.

Quote assessment and review log

Use this page with your own service and circumstances. Record assumptions separately from confirmed facts, and update the plan using actual work.

Surface / suitability / condition

Access / water / nearby property / runoff approach

Preparation / washing / cleanup / travel

Scope exclusions / inspection questions / minimum charge

Labor rate / direct costs / overhead allocation

Allowance method / fees to check / final agreed scope

Review before taking the next step

Quote wording: Based on [assessed scope], the price is [amount] for [inclusions]. Exclusions: [items]. If conditions differ, we will assess and agree on any change before extra work begins. Insert your actual terms and obtain suitable advice where needed.

- [ ] Scope and condition assumptions recorded.
- [ ] All labor stages included.
- [ ] Costs not double counted.
- [ ] Quoted versus actual results reviewed.

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