



HARD SURFACE

S,T & G Sealer Haze

INTRODUCTION

More and more cleaners are adding tile and grout cleaning and sealing to the list of services they provide. With more cleaners cleaning more tile and grout they are encountering unexpected problems. One such concern is a white haze on the grout or tile after the floors dry.

Two common situations result in a white haze after cleaning. The first is efflorescence. Efflorescence appears as a white powder on the grout line or on the tile near the grout. Efflorescence is discussed in a different Technical Bulletin.

This Technical Bulletin focuses on sealer residue. This appears as a milky white haze where sealer has pooled and dried on the surface rather than penetrating into the grout or stone. This is more easily seen on dark colored grout.

THE CAUSES

Stone and grout sealer is intended to penetrate the porous surfaces and fill the capillaries. This prevents other liquids, either water or oils, from getting into those same pores and staining the surface.

If the seal stays on the surface, it can dry to a milky haze. If much sealer remains on the surface, the residue will be sticky.

If stone and grout sealer has dried on the surface, something prevented it from penetrating.

Unlike carpet protector which wears off with foot traffic, grout sealer below the surface does not wear off with traffic. Previous applications of sealer may

prevent a new coat of sealer from penetrating.

Some grout is more porous than other grout. The amount of sealer that was just right for one job may be too much for another site.

An increasing number of grouts contain polymers, latex or epoxy. These are non-porous surfaces. These types of grout, in effect, have a built-in sealer. They may not accept any sealer or will only accept solvent based sealers. Attempts to seal with water based sealers will leave a film.

When more than one coat of sealer is applied, the first coat can keep subsequent coats from penetrating.

Moisture that remains in the grout or stone acts as a barrier to solvent based sealers.

AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION

All of the above scenarios can usually be prevented by first determining how much seal is appropriate for each job. A simple test in a small area should answer that question. You only need to test a small area.

Select your test area somewhere that has received average traffic. If the floor has been sealed previously, a low traffic area would need less sealer.

Apply a few drops of water to the grout lines. On a natural stone floor, you should also test the stone in the same way. Observe how quickly the water takes to penetrate.

If the water penetrates quickly it means there is little or no sealer present. If the water does not soak in, then the floor does not need additional sealer.

The water test will tell you whether or not the floor should be sealed. If it does need to be sealed, it

will also give a rough idea of how much sealer is required.

Now apply seal to an area about 18" on a side. When it has dried, you can determine if there is enough sealer or perhaps too much.

It will always be easier to add another thin coat than to remove excess sealer. Do not overuse tile & grout sealer!

PROCEDURE TO CORRECT OVER-APPLICATION

➤ STEP 1

Thin, dry sealer haze on ceramic or porcelain tile or smooth stone surfaces can be polished off using a white polishing pad under a standard rotary machine. For more extreme cases, you may need to use a red buffing pad.

An excess of dried sealer in the grout lines can be removed with a grout brush.

➤ STEP 2

To remove built-up or sticky residue from grout lines, wet the surface with isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol.

➤ STEP 3

Agitate briefly with a grout brush.

➤ STEP 4

Vigorously wipe the grout lines with a white, absorbent, cotton towel. You will be removing some of the sealer along with any remaining alcohol.

➤ STEP 5

Continue until all affected areas have been treated. Repeat if needed.

➤ **STEP 6**

Depending on the sealer used and the time it has been down, the alcohol may not dissolve it. Seal can be emulsified and returned to a liquid state by applying a small amount of Premium Grout & Stone Sealer.

➤ **STEP 7**

As soon as the sealer begins to liquefy, wipe it up with a clean, absorbent cotton towel.

Chemicals Needed



Isopropyl Alcohol
Premium Grout & Stone Sealer

Description: A penetrating sealer to protect against water and oil based soils and spills.

Accessories Needed



Grout Brush

Description: Provides extra agitation to grout lines from a standing position.

Highlights: Unique pivoting head allows the brush to glide in the grout lines even along edges and in corners.



Spotting Towels

Description: Absorbent white cotton

Highlights: Used to absorb stain material

Equipment Needed



Rotary Machine

Description: Rotary cleaning, scrubbing and buffing

Highlights: Can be used with bonnets, pads or brushes for a variety of cleaning chores.

Quick Guide

PROCEDURE

1. Buff haze off tile.
2. Apply isopropyl alcohol.
3. Agitate.
4. Wipe off excess sealer.
5. Repeat, if needed.
6. If required, apply Premium Stone & Grout Sealer.
7. Wipe off liquefied sealer.



PRODUCTS NEEDED

- Isopropyl alcohol
- Premium Stone & Grout Sealer
- Grout Brush
- White, absorbent, cotton towels
- Rotary Floor Machine
- White polishing pads and/or red buffing pads

Other Resources

Other Resources

Bridgepoint Fast Track Grout Cleaning Guide
Bridgepoint Accelerated Tile & Grout Cleaning
Module

Bridgepoint Catalog

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