



TECHNICAL BULLETIN

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RE: Follow up procedures for your tile installation after the cementitious grout has been installed.

Common to all good tile and grout installations, are correct and careful workmanship by the applicator and follow through with proper curing conditions. Many times after the tile has been set and grouted, the job-site is left overnight to dry with no follow up procedures. Attention to follow up procedures will carry on the good work and produce a superb tile installation.

Curing Conditions- This is one of the most important factors in grout color yet is the most overlooked. Inconsistent, uneven and splotchy colored cementitious grout is often due to poor curing conditions. Changes in temperature of the grout installation during the installation and into the first 72 hours will cause some degree of discoloration. Variation in the rate of evaporation or absorption of the water in the grout due to wind, sun, fog, rain, fans, heaters, drafts, vents, water puddles and moisture from a mud bed or substrate cause color problems.

Maintain a constant temperature (ideal temperature is 70 degrees fahrenheit) for the installation. The temperature may be lower or higher but a consistent temperature is required to achieve a consistent and even color.

Prevent, block or remove all sources that would cause uneven drying conditions for the first 72 hours. Use of natural kraft paper is recommended to cover the installation after the grout has been cleaned from the face of the tile. All excess water and cleaning residue should be removed from the tile and grout surfaces before covering. Plastic sheets or newspaper should never be used to cover the grout and tile.

Damp cure or water mist the grout at 20-24 hour intervals for the first 3 days. This will insure even drying and full hydration of the grout. Latex modified grouts do not require damp curing.

Cleaning the Grout and Tile- Normal to all cementitious grout installations is a fine, powdery grout residue or haze present on the tile and grout after drying overnight (normally 24 hours). This residue is removed from the tile installation during the "final cleaning" by wet mopping/scrubbing the surface.

Saturate the grout with clean water before attempting to remove the residue. This keeps the wash slurry (tile and grout residue/water) from being absorbed into the pores of the grout.

A TSP (Tri Sodium Phosphate) and water solution will help clean the cementitious grout residue from the tile and grout without harm. Some scrubbing on difficult areas with a stiff plastic bristle brush or a plastic 3M cleaning pad may be required. Follow the TSP container directions. As the TSP solution becomes discolored or dirty, replace it with fresh solution.

Rinse and remove all wash slurry or residue completely from tile and grout surfaces. The most common cause of grout discoloration is leaving cleaning residue on the surface of the grout joint. Use of a wet/dry vacuum will help aid in the cleanup and removal.

After 10 days of curing, the tile and grout may require a sulfamic acid cleaning. Use Tex-Rite's C-Clean and carefully follow the directions on the container. Always saturate the grout with clean water before applying the C-Clean solution. Never use acids on natural marble or

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thin glazed tile installations because etching of the polish or glazing will occur. Never use Muriatic acid or Vinegar on any grout.

Note: An unglazed tile or porous surface tile will show a shade change, hue change or stain when grouted. The tile surface can have tiny, cementitious grout particles trapped in microscopic holes and pits found on the surface of the tile. Often severe cases of the tile surface staining cannot be removed to the satisfaction of the costumers. The entire tile installation has to be removed, making repairs a costly mistake. Moderate and light cases of tile surface staining can sometimes be avoided by dampening the face of the tile with a wet sponge just prior to grout application. Wiping the tile with a sponge and clean water immediately before the grout is placed on the tile surface will reduce the effort required to remove the grout from the tile and it will fill the tiny pores with water which helps prevent absorption of the cement and pigment into the tile surface. Use of a grout release on the tiles prior to applying the grout is always advisable on unglazed or porous surface tile. Always test the chosen cement grout on extra unglazed or porous tiles from the installation to determine if a grout release is necessary. Never use a sealer that is not designed as a grout release to prevent staining of tiles during the grout application and cleaning process.