

## **CONCRETE, TERRAZZO, MARBLE, CERAMIC & TILE FLOOR MAINTENANCE**

### **CONCRETE FLOORS**

Because concrete is very porous it should be sealed to make maintenance easier and to improve appearance. Concrete is considered new for at least 90 days and during this time no sealers or finish should be applied due to the moisture content in the concrete. During this time the contractor who laid the concrete may apply a curing compound to speed up the curing process. These compounds will also act effectively as interim sealers. Before sealing old or fully cured concrete the floor must be free of all dirt and soil, tire marks, grease, printing inks, oil and old badly worn sealers.

### **HOW TO SEAL CONCRETE FLOORS**

- 1) Clear area.
- 2) Sweep floor to remove large debris.
- 3) Strip the floor in the same method as a resilient floor by using the appropriate chemical to remove the soil or type of sealer that is on the concrete. When using solvent based chemicals make sure you have adequate ventilation, no smoking and be sure all pilot lights are out. Be sure to follow manufacturer recommendations. Strip and pick-up in about a 7'x7' area before solution dries and re-deposits sealer back on the floor.
- 4) If you use a solvent-based stripper a second application of water based cleaner is used to remove any solvent residue.
- 5) After floor is clean, before sealing, concrete floors should be etched to remove surface glaze and neutralize the surface alkalinity of the floor so the sealer will bond. Etching compounds are acid and should be used with caution and to manufacturer recommendations.
- 6) There are many types of concrete sealers, water based, solvent based, chlorinated rubber, urethane based, etc. Be sure you have the right sealer for the job.
- 7) Use manufacturers suggested application procedures. Sealers are mopped on, rolled on, or sprayed on, depending on the particular sealer or circumstance.
- 8) After sealing a finish may be used to protect the sealed floor or to enhance the appearance. Some floors are only salvageable by grinding off the dirt or scarifying them before the above procedures are done.

### **CONCRETE FLOOR MAINTENANCE**

The procedure for proper maintenance can vary from floor to floor depending on the use of the floor. But generally sweeping or dust mopping and scrubbing with a mild detergent will suffice.

### **TERRAZZO FLOORS**

Terrazzo is mad up of concrete and marble chips. The same procedures can be used on terrazzo as resilient floors with the following exceptions:

- 1) Neutral cleaners should be used so not to damage the marble or concrete in the terrazzo. Do not use acid on terrazzo floors.
- 2) The sealer should be one designed for terrazzo.

### **MARBLE FLOORS**

Maintenance of marble is similar to terrazzo but marble usually has a glazed surface so sealers are usually not recommended although in heavy traffic areas they are some times used.

Never use acid cleaners on marble floors. Floor finish will protect the marble from scratching.

### **CERAMIC & QUARRY TILE FLOORS**

These floor coverings are usually used in wet areas such as kitchens, washrooms and swimming pools although sometimes they are used in large common areas or heavy traffic areas.

Ceramic tiles are usually very hard and glazed therefore usually should not be sealed but very easy to clean and maintain.

The grout between the tiles can be a problem. An acid type grout cleaner can be used to clean the grout and a grout sealer can be applied to make future maintenance easier. The floor can be washed with any mild cleaner or disinfectant cleaner. Do not use acid cleaners on colored grout. Quarry tile is usually very porous and can be sealed for easier maintenance and better appearance but sealing in kitchen areas where harsh chemicals are used is not recommended as the harsh chemicals can break down the sealer. Also sealing in wet areas can create slip hazards.

Note: NEVER SEAL GLAZED CERAMIC OR QUARRY TILE

CAUTION: When mixing chemicals, for safety, always pour the stronger into the weaker. i.e. - always pour acid into water.