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# HARD FLOOR CARE

## Objectives and Procedures

851 Progress Court Oakville, Ontario L6J 5A8  
905-847-3000 Fax 905-847-1675  
www.rochestermidland.ca

Hard floor care consists of two main objectives. One is to protect the floor surface of vinyl, vinyl asbestos, asphalt or linoleum. The second is to enhance to appearance of the floor. The key to any floor care program is to keep the floor as clean as possible. Time spent cleaning the floor will be time saved in repairing damage done to the floor by dirt.

Daily and periodic maintenance of hard tile floors consists of dust mopping, damp mopping, scrubbing, recoating, and spray buffing or burnishing. A program of periodic deep scrubbing and recoating will prolong the life of the finish and prevent the more labour intense stripping operation.

When stripping and recoating a tile floor, several things should be considered. Floor finish strippers are very high in alkalinity. Care should be taken to avoid contact with skin as burns can develop. Also avoid "dry buffing" a freshly stripped floor. This is a practice that tends to abrade the floor prior to applying floor finish. The problem with this procedure is that on vinyl asbestos flooring you could release asbestos particles into the air which is hazardous to your health. A properly striped floor should have a uniform dull look with no evidence of floor finish remaining on the floor. After rinsing and cleaning the floor surface, you are ready to apply sealer or floor finish to the floor.

Most modern finishes are designed to be applied with a medium to heavy coat. This means that you should dip the finish mop (not cotton) in the bucket and set it in the wringer. You should tap the mop into the wringer to remove any excess finish. Do not wring the mop out with the wringer, as this will cause foaming of the finish and leave bubbles on your finished floor.

After applying the finish, let it set undisturbed. If you feel you need a fan for faster drying simply follow two important precautions. Do not turn the fan on until the finish has had at least 15 minutes to level out. Then point the fan at an angle facing up. For the best results, let the finish dry naturally and be sure it is completely dry before applying the next coat.

### PROBABLE CAUSE / POTENTIAL CURE

#### PROBLEM:

##### FINISH POWDERING

Improper stripping procedures. Too thin a coat applied. Finish applied to a floor that was below 15.5°C (60°F). Finish will not adhere to a floor that has an alkaline residue from stripping. Proper rinsing with cold water will prevent this.

##### STREAKS IN FINISH

Too thin a coat. Too many coats in one day (3-4 maximum). Contaminated finish or improper use of a fan. Floor finishing can streak quite easily. To prevent this, always apply a medium coat and leave plenty of drying time. Sometimes streaks can be removed by spray buffing. If not, you may need to strip and recoat.

##### FINISH "YELLOWING"

Dirt embedded in finish. Contaminated finish. Most modern floor finishes today do not contain "wax". They are made from man-made "synthetic" products that do not yellow. This problem is usually caused by dirt embedding in the finish causing it to discolour or darken. This can be prevented by stopping more dirt at the door and doing a better job of deep cleaning the floor on a regular basis.

##### POOR GLOSS

Not enough finish on the floor. Lack of periodic spray buffing or burnishing. To develop a professional looking floor you must start with a good base of finish on the floor. Usually, you will need between 3-6 coats of finish to have a good base. The challenge is to keep this base of finish maintained and clean. The most effective way of doing this is a periodic procedure of deep scrubbing and recoating. If you keep this base of finish maintained and clean, you will be able to go 3 to 5 years without stripping.

##### DISCOLOURED SPOTS

Improper stripping procedures. Most discoloured spots deep in the finish may be floor finish residue that was left on the floor during the last stripping operation. When stripping, all finish must be removed from the floor. It will not "just blend in".

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