

CLEANING AND MAINTENANCE GUIDE.

SERIES 17 SOLUTION DYED NYLON CARPET TILES

Overview

Protect your carpet tile investment carefully with a planned and executed maintenance programme which will help protect the aesthetic and functional value of your carpet tiles.

This maintenance guide has been compiled to help you plan and implement an effective carpet care programme. Maintenance programmes may be carried out by in-house staff or by outside professional cleaners or a combination of both. Whichever is chosen a cleaner should pre-inspect the carpet, identify its construction and fibre to evaluate the soiling and cleaning needs and proceed with the appropriate cleaning method and procedures. The effectiveness of any cleaning programme depends on careful supervision, trained personnel and the usage of correct equipment and chemicals.

Preventative measures

Good quality walk-off matting and similar soiling barriers provide the first protection against tracked-in dirt which typically accounts for 80% of the soil deposited on carpets tiles.

Entrance matting

A buildings main entrance area is especially vulnerable to heavy soiling, the majority of which is deposited directly by foot traffic. We estimate that within approximately 3 metres of carpet, the residual soil off a pair of shoes is effectively removed. Therefore we consider that 3 metres of entrance matting will greatly reduce the amount of tracked in dirt and in turn reduce the degree of maintenance. We recommend 1.5m of matting outside the main entrance and 1.5m immediately inside. The greatest carpet killer is abrasion by grit and soiling by dirt. Because 80% of soil is carried into a building on shoes it follows that performance and appearance retention is not entirely the responsibility of the carpet. Remember prevention is better than cure. Regular maintenance Carpets tiles are a very tolerant floorcovering and can be significantly soiled

long before soiling is visibly evident. Controlling soil is a preventative concept which will keep soiling to a minimum and prevent the build-up of abrasive dirt which can damage the carpet. With tracked in and airborne soil accounting for 95% of the overall soil deposited on carpet it follows that regular vacuuming is the most important component of our carpet maintenance programme. Effective vacuuming removes up to 80% of the soil present in carpets.

A sturdy vacuum cleaner with strong suction and a revolving agitator bar, beater bar or brush usually yields the best results. For effective vacuuming follow these guidelines:

1. Select professional equipment that is suited to your installation and volume traffic.
2. Use vacuum cleaners with good efficient filtering systems to prevent the redistribution of fine particles.
3. Vacuum slowly and thoroughly making three to five passes over an area.
4. Empty vacuum bags frequently. (A bag 2/3 full reduces the vacuum efficiency by 50%).
5. Keep equipment in good repair ensuring that all parts are kept maintained.

Ensure that the floor tool is repaired or replaced should it become buried so as not to damage the carpet tile pile.

Vacuuming techniques

1. For high traffic and tracked-in-soil areas vacuum daily using equipment with good brush action and high air flow.
2. For lighter traffic areas such as offices, conference rooms etc. vacuum every 2nd or 3rd day depending on usage.

Note: Despite the efficiency of regular vacuuming it will not remove oily and deep embedded soils, these must be removed with periodic deep cleaning.

Spot and stain removal

Every carpet is bound to acquire occasional spots and stains during its life.

Most stains can be avoided by immediate or at least daily treatment of spots and spills. If not they often become permanent stains.

It is good housekeeping practise to keep a commercial spotting kit on hand such as the Prochem K100 Spot Kit for household use or the Prochem K250 Professional Spotting Kit for large institutions such as hospitals, hotels, etc. However the following guide will assist you in removing most common spots and spills.

Important general techniques

1. Act Quickly! When something has been spilt, take steps immediately to rectify it.
2. For liquid spills; remove as much as possible with a wet vacuum cleaner or sponge. Blot small amounts with a clean white cloth or paper towel. Always work from the outside towards the centre. Proceed with the specified treatment of the remaining stain.
3. For semi-solid spots: remove as much surface material using a spoon, dull knife or scrapper. Always work from the outside toward the centre. Proceed with the specified treatment of the remaining stain.
4. For dry soil stains (sand, soot, etc.): remove as much of the spot as possible using a vacuum cleaner.
5. Do not over apply spotting solutions as this can result in premature re-soiling. It is good practise to apply the spotting solution to a cloth first rather than directly onto the carpet.
6. Always try a spotting solution on an inconspicuous location before using it. Check for dye and fabric stability.
7. Never scrub or rub when spotting, only agitate using a tapping or a blotting action to prevent fibre and pile distortion.

Interim maintenance

Interim maintenance is usually carried out in high traffic areas, tracked-in soil areas and other specific areas to restore clean carpet appearance. It can be carried out approximately once a month or before social functions, conferences etc depending on the foot traffic volume.

There are several techniques used for interim maintenance but the most common are absorbent powder cleaning or bonnet buffing.

Note however that these methods are unlikely to remove dirt which may have accumulated at the bottom of the carpet pile.

Interim maintenance should therefore not be looked on as a replacement for periodic deep cleaning.

Absorbent powder cleaning

This detergent impregnated powder is sprinkled onto the pile and brushed into the carpet. The detergent component of the mixture releases greasy soils from the surface of the fibres and the residual powder is vacuumed away. The advantage of absorbent powder cleaning is that the carpet pile is not wetted and can be walked on immediately afterwards. This process can be performed by in-house staff or outside professional cleaners.

Bonnet buffing

This technique utilizes a rotary machine fitted with a floppy-loop, textile, circular pad impregnated with special carpet cleaning detergent. Soil is transferred to the pad as it skims over the surface of the carpet tiles. It is a very cheap form of cleaning, is quick and leaves the carpet fairly dry.

Thorough vacuuming is recommended after both techniques.

Long-term maintenance

Long-term maintenance or periodic cleaning should be undertaken on a fixed cycle. Such maintenance involves a deep-cleaning process to remove the oily-soils etc, not removed by the regular or interim maintenance. Wet or spray extraction cleaning is recommended for this process. Wet extraction (sometimes called steam-cleaning) also removes a vast majority of the spots and stains present, removes abrasive soils trapped in the carpet fibres, restores the colour and removes bacteria, dust-mites and other allergens thus dramatically improving the Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) in the building. Under normal circumstances carpets should be deep cleaned every 12 months depending on the volume of traffic. Where there are people who suffer from allergies such as asthma the carpets should be deep-cleaned every 6-8 months. Such periodic cleaning is crucial to longevity of your carpet.

Wet extraction cleaning should be performed by professional cleaners or by trained in-house staff. Ensure that the equipment used is of good quality and condition, that the chemicals are of a reputable brand name, that the cleaner follows the AS/NZS 3733:1995 standard and that the cleaner is certified by a known cleaning association (such as ACCI, NUCCA, IICRC).

The following points should be followed when "wet extraction" cleaning.

1. Pre-inspect the carpet; noting badly soiled areas, spots & stains, carpet damage such as tears etc. Pre-test the chemicals to be used in an inconspicuous location, checking for dye and fabric stability.
2. Thoroughly vacuum the area to be cleaned.
3. Follow standard carpet cleaning techniques applicable to the equipment being used. Normally this involves pre-spraying the entire carpet or just the traffic-lanes and rinsing out using an acid rinse or extraction detergent where heavy soil is encountered.

Tips: Use Prochem E827 Olefin Pre-conditioner specifically designed for the cleaning of polypropylene and solution-dyed nylon carpets. Use Prochem 8109 All Fibre Rinse when rinsing after applying the prespray. This will ensure a minimum residue clean. Use Prochem S825 XL333 Extraction Liquid where the heavy soil method is used. Use hot water for more effective cleaning. Especially where fats and greases are encountered.

4. Treat any remaining spots or stains using appropriate spotting techniques and chemicals.
5. Provide maximum ventilation to dry the carpets as soon as possible.
6. Keep traffic off the carpet until completely dry. Replace furniture using small plastic squares under the feet. Deep clean your carpet using wet extraction methods every year.

Summary

Prevention is better than cure - use a good quality matting system. Regularly vacuum using a good quality vacuum cleaner. When spots or stains occur, act immediately using recommended methods. Perform interim maintenance every month or so if desired. Deep clean your carpet using wet extraction methods every year. Regular and frequent maintenance is the most effective means of maintaining your carpet. Consider the amount of money you have invested in your new floor covering - make sure you get the maximum return.