

Before any tile or stone installed by the “adhesive,” “thin-bed,” or “thin-set” method, the surface must be clean and free from grease, wax, oil, dust and soil. The best thin-set tile or stone installation is only as good as the bond to the substrate. Therefore, it is very important that the substrate be carefully cleaned and prepared to assure maximum bonding properties.

NEW CONCRETE SLABS

New concrete slabs should have a wood float finish. The surface should be true and level and pitched to drains where required. Concrete sealers or curing compounds should not be applied to the surface of concrete slabs that are to receive finished flooring. If the concrete surface does have a sealer or curing compound it must be removed. Also note, a concrete slab which has a very smooth shiny surface due to over-troweling should be mechanically scarified to ensure that the thin-set mortar can achieve a suitable bond to the concrete. Prior to the application of the finished flooring, the slabs should be thoroughly cleaned to remove loose plaster, soil and other foreign material.

OLD CONCRETE SLABS

Oil, grease and wax must be removed from old concrete slabs to insure a good bond. A mechanical scarifier, such as a Tennant® or Blastrac, will remove oil, grease or wax, as well as paint, adhesives, and even layers of asphalt tile from the surface.

If a mechanical scarifier is not used it will be necessary to remove oil, grease, or paint by chemical means. This can be accomplished by using a strong detergent solution such as trisodium phosphate or a solution of lye and hot water. The solution is mopped on the surface and allowed to stand 10 or 15 minutes or until it loosens the paint or grease. The solution is then squeegeed or mopped off and the treatment repeated. When all of the material has been removed from the floor, the surface should be flushed thoroughly with water to remove any remaining cleaning solution.

CAUTION: STRONG DETERGENT SOLUTIONS, SUCH AS TRISODIUM PHOSPHATE OR LYE, MAY IRRITATE EYES AND SKIN. WEAR PROTECTIVE CLOTHING AND GOGGLES WHEN PREPARING OR USING SUCH MATERIALS. ALWAYS READ MANUFACTURER’S INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE USING.

CRACKS

Non-structural cracks that occur slabs can be transmitted through any thin bed tile work. It is sometimes possible to stop these cracks from coming through the finished flooring by applying a LATICRETE® Anti-Fracture or Crack Isolation Membrane over these cracks.

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