



Specialty Products Through Innovation

CONSIDERATIONS WHEN FIRST FINISHING NEW VINYL COMPOSITION TILE FLOORS

Newly installed floors present special considerations. All resilient tiles are manufactured using chemicals called plasticizers. Plasticizers are the chemicals that aid the liquid vinyl in hardening to a point where it can be used for flooring tile. Plasticizers are also used in floor finishes to cause the liquid finish to form the film that coats the tile. Virtually all brand new tiles have unreacted, plasticizers or other contaminants in them leftover from the manufacturing process. When floor finishes are first put on new tiles, the leftover plasticizers in the tile migrates into the floor finish. The effects of this plasticizer migration on floor finish often displays itself as crawling or seperating, fish-eyes or small holes that appear in the finish while drying. Mop application marks, drying with a hazy or dull appearance or in extreme cases adhesion problems that result in the finish flaking or powdering off of the floor are also signs of residual plasticizers or contaminants.

These problems can often be solved by stripping the tile prior to the initial application of floor finish. Because of the wide spread use of water-based, vinyl and latex adhesives, the more effective no-rinse type strippers like Perma's #118 Eliminator should be avoided or used with extreme care to avoid dissolving partially cured adhesive. A safer choice is to use an alkaline type stripper like Perma's #117 Brut which is less likely to dissolve the adhesive.

Care should also be given to allow extra drying time for the first coats because over plasticized finishes take longer to cure. Over time, normal stripping and recoating procedures will remove the excess plasticizers from the new tile and the problems will resolve themselves.

Steps For Preparing Newly Installing VCT Floors

- 1. Scrub new VCT Tile using Perma #117 Brut Stripper, diluted 6 ounces per gallon with cold water, preferably using an automatic scrubber or a low speed buffing machine equipped with a blue or green scrubbing pad. This procedure is performed to remove the majority of the excess plasticizers left by the manufacturing process, from the tile.**
- 2. Vacuum up the soiled solution using either the automatic scrubber or a wet/dry vacuum.**
- 3. Rinse the floor using Perma #127 Tops Neutral Cleaner diluted 1 ounce of Tops per gallon of cold or warm water prefereably using an automatic scrubber with a blue or green pad or by damp mopping with a good quality cotton mop and wringer bucket. This procedure will neutralize any alkaline stripper solution not removed by vacuuming and leave a small amount of surfactant to assist in leveling of the floor finish.**
- 4. Apply the floor finish in thin even coats, using a quality synthetic blend string or flat finish application mop. Watch for signs of residual plasticizers such as crawling, seperation or fisheyes. If these reactions are observed, finish application should be halted and the floor re-scrubbed to remove the plasticizers or other contaminants. It is advisable to allow additional drying time between coats (45-60 minutes when possible) to insure complete curing during the intial application of finish to a new floor. A total of three to five coats should be applied.**