

THE COMMERCIAL FLOORING REPORT

We Wish You Great Times Ahead, And May You Achieve All That You Wish For... Happy New Year

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TOTALLY GREEN PUBLICATION

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PROPER HARD SURFACE FLOORING MAINTENANCE TECHNIQUES MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE

This article is by Dane Gregory the Commercial Sales Manager for Bridgewater Corp, which owns several cleaning product and equipment related manufacturing operations.

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Many cleaning companies offer hard surface care to their customers but are you sure they are maximizing efficiencies to keep your hard surface flooring in as good a shape as is possible? Looking at service plans will keep maintenance techniques as efficient as possible in commercial buildings. Service time lines can be broken down into four categories:

- ❖ Initial
- ❖ Routine
- ❖ Periodic or Interim
- ❖ Restoration or Corrective

Each portion of the timeline is critical for longevity of the flooring as well as the daily appearance. Let's explore the options open to using the entire spectrum of hard surface maintenance.

In an **initial** maintenance focus the procedure is completed immediately upon installation of the flooring. In each hard surface category, maintenance professionals must have an initial plan of action. Some examples would be for VCT flooring, to remove as much as possible of the factory paraffin finish to ensure good bond with top coat finishes. In a tile and grout installation it may be the removal of the inevitable grout haze from the installation crew. Removal should be accomplished for proper appearance of the tile. In this situation the grout should be sealed to keep spills from staining the grout area. The initial maintenance phase of operations puts the floor into the maintenance position for future services and keeps the maintenance plan effective. Without this initial set of operations the other parts of the maintenance plan will break down.

Routine procedures are paramount for keeping up appearances. The better these tasks are accomplished the less restorative procedures will be necessary. These procedures are very efficient and usually lower cost tasks. The maintenance teams should understand the basic concepts for dry for dry particulate soil

removal for all types of hard surface flooring. VCT and other flat floors can be dusted easily, however grouted surfaces need proper vacuuming to remove the dry soils in the grout channel. Dusting with microfiber or traditional dust mops or other flat surface cleaning tools do not completely remove soils deposited in the grout channel. Not taking action on the deposited soils can cause high levels of buildup in grout. If there are other soils present from cooking or food services the soil could easily be bound on the grout surface even if properly sealed with penetrating sealers.

The procedural concept of **periodic or interim** service is to delay the costly restoration work. These types of procedures are necessary only when the routine tasks do not leave the flooring with the appearance desired. The moment the flooring starts to exhibit a traffic pattern, action must be taken to remove either the embedded soils in the top coat finishes or the soils beginning to build up in the grout channels. Waiting once this condition is noticed drives up the cost of maintenance service both in supplies and labor. On VCT flooring or other top coated floors the time and cost savings techniques of light scrub and re-coat can be used. Done properly the floors will have a "like new" appearance with minimal cost.

Periodic procedures on grouted surfaces could include grout scrubbing with a hand brush with "V" shaped bristles to allow access of the brush to the low lying areas of the floor. In larger areas the procedures could call for rotary or cylindrical brushing machines designed to access the low areas. In either case, proper agitation of the soils trapped in the lower, recessed areas must be employed to facilitate soil removal. In all cases periodic procedures have to be part of an overall maintenance plan and be scheduled well in advance of soil accumulation.



The ultimate goal is to minimize restoration procedures. **Restorative or corrective** cleaning procedures drive up the cost of labor and materials and take the most time. Allowing floors to degrade to an appearance level necessitating restorative or corrective cleaning, causes occupants, patrons and customers of a space to see the flooring in the worst possible state.

Those responsible for routine flooring maintenance services can easily include proper cleaning methods, a service schedule and a service checklist to ensure adequate attention is given to the most important aspect of floor care. The CRI chart below gives a comparison of carpet versus hard surface light to medium traffic maintenance in a school for one year.

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SCHOOLS – FLOOR MAINTENANCE				
School Schedule – 36 Weeks – Labor \$9.76/hr. (16.3¢/minute; ref. CM survey, May 01)				
Light-to-Medium Traffic – e.g., Conference rooms, teacher offices, break areas, auditoriums, limited-access areas, media centers, administrative office areas, classrooms used part-time.				
CARPET	Frequency/ School Year	Minutes/ 1000 Sq. Ft.	School Year Total Minutes Per 1000 Sq. Ft.	Cost Per School Year \$/Sq. Ft.
Vacuuming*	180 (daily)	12	2160	\$0.3521
Spot Removal**	72 (2x wk)	12	864	\$0.1408
Rinse Cleaning***	2 (May, Oct)	45	90	\$0.0147
Deep Cleaning****	3 (Aug, Dec, Mar)	90	270	\$0.0440
Chemical Costs				\$0.0031
TOTAL			3384	\$0.5547

* Anticipates thorough vacuuming 3x weekly and entry/high traffic vacuuming 2x weekly. Failure to accomplish vacuuming routinely, especially in entry areas, is a major mistake that leads to soil buildup in all areas, and ultimately in diminished flooring investment life. In other words, maintain 5% of the building area well and you can cut maintenance time in the other 95% by 1/3 to 1/2.

** Worst case, failure to spot clean carpet only results in unsightly appearance; not slip-fall hazards. This schedule provides 24 minutes per week per 1000 sf. Most of this probably will be done as needed for major problems, or once a week. It envisions time for light cleaning in entry areas and is almost as much time as it takes for a "rinse" cleaning.

*** Interim maintenance cleaning (hot water rinse) not only maintains aesthetics, it also extends the investment use-life, while prolonging the interval between deep cleanings.

**** Carpet is the largest horizontal surface in a building and the collection point for everything that falls out of the air. To use appearance as the criteria for cleaning intervals for any floor covering is not only foolish, but it may be downright unhealthy. Further, more frequent cleaning prolongs flooring investment life.

VCT	Frequency/ School Year	Minutes/ 1000 Sq. Ft.	School Year Total Minutes Per 1000 Sq. Ft.	Cost Per School Year \$/Sq. Ft.
Dust Mopping	*180 (daily)	6	1080	\$0.1760
Spot Mopping	**180 (daily)	6	1080	\$0.1760
Wet Mopping	108 (3x wk)	30***	3240	\$0.5281
Spray Buffing	18 (EO-Wk)	30****	540	\$0.0880
Scrub/Recoat	2 (Dec, Mar) ^{Note 1}	120	240	\$0.0391
Strip/Refinish	1 (Aug) ^{Note 2}	300	300	\$0.0489
Chemical Cost ^{Note 3}				\$0.0260
TOTAL			5726	\$1.0821

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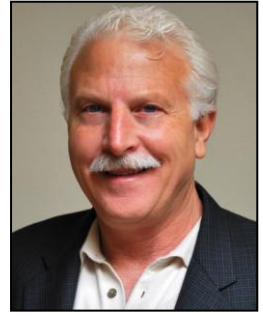
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U.S. Patent 7,231,815. Additional patents pending.

Donato Pompo Honored with Construction Specifier Magazine Article of the Year Award



San Diego, CA – October 4, 2012 – Donato V. Pompo, CTC, CMR, CSI, CDT, MBA of Ceramic Tile and Stone Consultants, Inc. (CTaSC) was honored with The Construction Specifier Magazine Article of the Year Award by the Construction Specifications Institute (CSI). CSI is a prominent architectural association for architects that prepare construction specifications. The award was presented to Mr. Pompo at CSI's Annual Meeting held in conjunction with CONSTRUCT 2012 in Phoenix on September 14, 2012.

The article that earned Mr. Pompo the distinguished recognition from CSI is entitled "Good Specs Mean Good Tile and Stone Installations" and appeared in the magazine's December 2011 issue (<http://www.kenilworth.com/publications/cs/de/201112/files/30.html>). CSI's Editorial Advisory Board stated that they selected Pompo's article based on its relevance to the industry as a whole, readability, impact, and alignment with CSI's mission and technical standards and formats. We're proud to say that Donato is an associate of LGM and also a member of the Floor Covering Institute. Donato adds Ceramic Tile and Stone Installation specifications to the three Commercial Flooring Report issues on flooring specifications.

I will be speaking at **Surfaces 2013**. Two presentations are scheduled: **Carpet Fibers – New Technologies and Advancements** and **Avoiding Problems with Floor Covering – Getting the Right Product in the Right Place**. In addition we are offering the **Flooring Symposium 2013** information on that two day event follows. This is a unique program you must plan on attending if you want to gain an advantage in your business. <http://www.surfaces.com/attendee/show-information.aspx>

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The new **Velcro Brand Carpet Protector** is ready to go. This product takes the place of clear plastic coverings with pressure sensitive adhesive that have created a host of problems for the industry. The new **Velcro Brand Carpet Protector** is made for use on loop and cut and loop carpet; the vast majority of commercial carpet. Bentley Prince Street is the first carpet manufacturer to offer this unique product. Contact Velcro for more information and samples.

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Systems like EnviroSTIX for hard surface and hard backed flooring materials and Bentley Prince Street Contact Release for carpet are systems that will help prevent the failure of flooring installations. There is more technology coming, most of which we are involved with. We'll keep you informed to help you. In the meantime understand that moisture, temperature and humidity have a profound effect on flooring materials and the integrity of their installation.

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