

## **Hard Floor Cleaning and Maintenance 101**

Keeping hard surface floors clean of the daily tracking of abrasive dust and dirt is one of the most important maintenance issues addressed by Gibb Building Maintenance. Particles left on the floor surface are active agents of wear when ground in by foot traffic. Appropriate measures to reduce the daily dust and dirt on the floor can greatly affect the maintenance requirements for your hard floor surfaces. A comprehensive program designed by Gibb Building Maintenance for your specific hard floor service can go a long way to increasing longevity and maintaining a consistently pleasant look.

Achieving that “wet look” shine on hard-floors requires much more than daily sweeping and mopping. Gibb Building Maintenance offers many different types of methods and materials to keep your hardwood, specialty flooring, marble, sheet vinyl, vinyl composite tile (VCT), concrete, and ceramic tile, performing and looking great.

Gibb recommends using the correct type and adequate lengths of “walk-off” matting by entrances to dramatically reduce the amount of dirt tracked into your facility. With a regular sweeping/vacuuming and mopping schedule of hard floors, the professionals at Gibb Building Maintenance will keep particle levels down within your work environment. Taking these actions to prevent damaging particles from being ground into the floor will allow finishes to last longer and reduce the need for more frequent maintenance or replacement later on. This means lower replacement costs to you and your business.

### **Stripping and Refinishing**

This intense hard floor maintenance process cleans all layers of the hard floor. This involves completely removing, or stripping, all the existing finish on the floor, deep cleaning the bare surface, sealing the surface to plug pores, and then putting new layers of protective finish back on. Stripping and refinishing should be done at least once per year and is vital to the performance, aesthetic appearance, and longevity of your flooring. When refinishing, the use of quality waxes can be well worth their additional cost. These waxes, which typically contain a high concentration of solids, are less labor intensive to apply as they allow for a faster film build in fewer coats. They also emit comparatively lower levels of volatile organic compounds as they cure.

### **Scrubbing and Refinishing**

Between full-scale stripping and refinishing, interim maintenance is required to preserve the sealants on your hard floors. One of these processes, scrubbing and refinishing,

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removes only the top layers of the existing finish and then covers the remaining layers with a new coat of finish. Scrubbing can extend the time between stripping and refinishing, but the scrub-refinish cycle should be performed a limited number of times before stripping as numerous finish layers will build up, and require extra labor and products to remove.

### **Buffing and Burnishing**

These maintenance techniques that can keep your floors in good condition between stripping. They are similar processes that use the heat from friction created by machine weight and circular rotation of special pads to clean, polish, and harden the finishes on floors. The difference between them is their rotation speed and gloss appearance.

### **Grouted Tile Surfaces**

A very different challenge is found in maintaining tile grout surfaces. Keeping grout clean requires frequent scrubbing. If grout is not cleaned properly or with enough frequency it can become not only an aesthetic problem, but a sanitary issue as well. Grout is a material that absorbs liquids readily. Sealants for grout are typically not very effective, although an impregnator solution can penetrate the pore structure of grout and reduce the absorption of other liquids. Tile grout can therefore become a haven for bacteria and, if not properly cleaned, can begin to smell displeasing and even raise health risks. Soaking and scrubbing grout frequently and thoroughly both by hand and with floor machines is important.

### **Experience Counts**

The proper cleaning and maintenance of your building's flooring can greatly increase service life, maintain a good look, enhance slip resistance, and deny bacteria a haven. The dedicated management and cleaning staff of Gibb Building Maintenance have the knowledge and experience to apply the appropriate methods and materials to your hard floor services, saving you and your company time and money.

