

*OSHA regulations state that all places of employment should be clean, orderly and sanitary, and walking/working surfaces should be regularly inspected and maintained in a safe condition. Improper or inadequate maintenance procedures can jeopardize the appearance and useful life of hard-surfaced flooring and more importantly, its safety. Years of improper cleaning can lead to floors with low traction and an increased risk of slips and falls. Reviewing floor cleaning procedures can help reduce premature wear and the number of slip and fall incidents.*



### General Cleaning Techniques for All Floor Types

- Document floor cleaning procedures and train your staff.
  - Provide floor mats at building entrances to keep contaminants outside. A good mat strategy can help trap sand and grit before it damages your floor's finish. Depending on the entrance configuration and space available, mats should cover the first five steps inside the building or more if possible.
  - Clean up spills immediately using a damp cloth or mop.
  - Cordon off areas to be cleaned and/or clean during periods of low activity.
  - Remove loose soil, dust and debris with a broom, dust mop or vacuum before using any cleaning products. This will help prevent damage to the floor's finish.
  - Do not use sweeping compounds or oil-treated mops.
  - Use cleaning products and concentrations as recommended by the flooring manufacturer.
  - Refer to Safety Data Sheets for recommended personal protective equipment and other safety information before using cleaning chemicals.
- Make sure the cleaning solution does not dry on the surface. Clean a small area and complete the entire process before moving to the next area.
  - Give the cleaning solution enough time to break down contaminants. If you immediately vacuum or mop it from the surface, the cleaner will not have time to work.
  - Change the cleaning solution as it becomes dirty.
  - After cleaning, remove all traces of soaps and cleaners from the floor surface. Extraction techniques should be used whenever possible to minimize residue.
  - Allow floors to dry completely before allowing people back into the area. Use floor fans if needed to speed the drying process.
  - When refinishing is required, consider alternatives to wet chemical stripping, such as deep scrubbing/recoating or dry stripping.

Continued

- Monitor your floor traction and take steps to remedy low-traction, slippery flooring. Products are available to improve traction on all types of hard-surfaced flooring.

### Maintenance Recommendations for Common Floor Types

#### Terrazzo and Polished Concrete

**Daily Maintenance:** Vacuum or sweep with a clean, nontreated dry dust mop or microfiber pad. Use a neutral cleaner (pH 6-8) diluted in warm water for stubborn stains and scuff marks. For large areas, use an automatic floor scrubber with a nonabrasive pad.

**Weekly Maintenance:** Damp mop lightly soiled floors with a neutral cleaner. Heavily soiled floors should be scrubbed with a mechanical buffing machine and neutral cleaner. Mop up residue with clean water before it dries. Allow to dry and buff with a dry brush.

#### Ceramic Tile

##### Routine Maintenance

- Damp mop or spot clean as necessary using a pH-neutral tile cleaner.
- Thoroughly rinse all areas with clean, warm water.
- An automatic floor scrubber is recommended to save labor, minimize cleaner residue and leave a relatively dry floor.
- Immediately wipe up areas that are wet from spills, foreign substances or wet footwear.

#### Vinyl – Tile or Sheet

##### Routine Maintenance

- Damp mop or use an auto scrubber with a neutral cleaning solution and a low-speed buffing pad (red). Follow all label instructions. Rinse with clean water.
- To remove heavy soil, use a low-speed medium-

grade pad (blue or green) and a concentrated cleaner. Follow manufacturer's recommendations for RPM and pad type. Rinse floor with clean water after scrubbing.

- To refurbish and restore gloss, clean the floor and spray buff with a high-speed floor machine equipped with a white, tan or pink-colored buffing pad. A dilute solution (one part polish/two parts water) can be used for spray buffing.

##### Periodic Maintenance

- Once a year or as needed, strip the floor polish to avoid buildup and restore the finish.
- Use a floor machine equipped with a blue or green pad and a liquid stripping solution. Follow all label instructions.
- Use a wet/dry vacuum or auto scrubber to remove residual polish and stripping solution. Rinse thoroughly with clean water. **Warning:** An electric shock hazard may exist. Make sure a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) is used for any electrical connection in a wet environment.
- Apply three to five coats of a slip-resistant finish.
- **Note:** Select products (stripper, finish and cleaner) formulated to work together.

### For Additional Information

**EMC Insurance Companies:** [www.emcins.com](http://www.emcins.com)

- Online Training: Preventing Slips and Falls: Creating an Effective Program

**International Sanitary Supply Association (ISSA):**

[www.issa.com](http://www.issa.com)

- Hard Floor Care Programs
- Clean Standard

**National Floor Safety Institute:** [www.nfsi.org](http://www.nfsi.org)