How The Micro Etching Non Slip Treatment Effects Grout Joints

On occasion, a customer comments on how marvelous the appearance of his grout joints look, following the Safe Solution® anti-slip treatment. The reason being, the floor should be clean from our processes.

Does this mean that grout joints will always look perfect and uniform, following our anti-slip system?

No. In fact, all we can say is, ***"the grout joints will be as good as they will get with any competent and dynamic cleaning."***

If the grout joints are epoxy based, they may appear uniform, with one or two after treatment washings. These joints remain completely unaffected by our treatment.

As for the standard cementitious grout joints, these will be clean but not necessarily uniform. In the case of grimy, dirty, filthy, mucky, soiled, caked and encrusted grout joints, the top GUNK will be removed but the joints may have suffered impurities over a long period of time. These impurities my even have penetrated down into the setting bed. Besides, these grout joints never were uniform in appearance. Yes, it is common even for NEW tile and grout, even for experienced tile-setters. The only thing that made them look uniform was the layer of grime on their surface, before the Safe Solution® treatment began.

I think I can come up with over **twenty reasons why grout joints are NOT uniform** in appearance, before or after our treatment. Let's look at some of the obvious reasons for this happening while the tiles are originally being installed:

1/ Different colors of grouts are different, each manufacturer has different overall formulations, different working characteristics, etc. This makes it nonstandard for tile-setters and there are no ideal grouting methods.

2/ Not first dry blending the grout, as stated on most bags;

3/ Not slaking (allowing chemical action to start) and remixing the bucket;

4/ Too fast, high speed mixing or not thorough mixing;

5/ Mixing in contaminated containers or using mineralized or high salts content water - i.e. different regions will have different results;

6/ Grout mixed too wet;

7/ Grout not cured properly or consistently;

8/ Using too much water during clean-up;

9/ Inconsistent absorption of highly porous or absorptive tiles;

10/ The initial clean-up acid cleaning concentration is too strong, used too early or on dry joints; Manufacturers of grouts will unreservedly recommend it for one time final grouting application clean-up, recognizing that acrylic enhanced (polymer-modified) grouts have some acid resistance. Of course, we also like the fact joints have some acid resistant properties.

11/ Gypsum dust from drywall or plaster and dust from construction conditions while initially grouting;

12/ Residues from cleaning materials or using a sponge rather than a cloth for initial grout clean-up;

13/ Grouting before the wetter areas of the setting bed have uniformly dried;

14/ Glaze on some of the edges of a tile and scored tile edges with exposed bisque;

15/ The grouting was done by different grouters and under different environmental conditions;

16/ Setting materials (mortar) inconsistently within the upper two thirds of grout joints;

17/ Spacers left in joints;

18/ Improper damp-curing with polyethylene sheeting;

19/ Excessive mix of latex admix/additives;

20/ Use of partial bags mixed where ingredients have separated; especially, bags that have travelled and vibrated in the back of trucks;

21/ Incorrect grout selection for joint size, tile or area;

So, there are over twenty reasons why grout joints will often not appear uniform, even when cleaned thoroughly. It's something you should know.

Technical information provided by Mr. Peter Collier, also known internationally as the TILEMan.