

Making Your Floor Last - Have a Plan

Today's resilient flooring is very durable, withstanding all kinds of traffic and conditions. The floor at the entrance to your company is one of the first impressions that many of your customers have of your company... what perception do you give? In addition it is an investment which needs to be protected to delay the cost of replacement as long as possible.

A planned program of regular cleaning and maintenance will allow the floor to last longer and perform better helping to give that "positive perception" that is essential to a company's image. Planning will help determine the most cost-effective methods to maintain the floor.

Creating the Plan

The first factor to consider is the traffic over the floor. The type and volume will play a large role in determining frequency of doing various cleaning and maintenance tasks. Where the flooring is located will have an impact on frequency as well. Usually entrances and lobbies will need more cleaning and protection than lower traffic areas or upper floors. The type and volume of traffic and soil will be different for a hospital examination room compared to the entrance into the offices of a machine shop or the entrance to a school.

Next, what are the expectations of the end user? What would be the acceptable appearance? High gloss or low gloss... which finish is desired? With today's floor finishes, high gloss does not mean slippery! (All Swish floor finishes come with the Underwriters Laboratory (UL) seal which guarantees they are anti-slip!)

The pattern of the flooring plus the colour will play a major role in designing your maintenance schedule. More elaborate or busier designs tend to hide soiling better than solid colours and no pattern.

Special traffic or footwear can create a different cleaning requirement. Rolling carts in an industrial environment will create a problem different from strollers in a daycare center. Dirt and grit carried in on a pair of work boots will cause more wear than smooth-soled dress shoes.

Look closely at what resources are available to reduce tracking and perform maintenance tasks. Since it costs a significant amount to remove a pound of tracked-in dirt from your building, it makes sense to use a good walk-off mat program and stop as much as possible at the entrance.

Your plan for each situation can be excellent but, if the training of your maintenance staff is not adequate, you will not get the results desired. The training portion of your plan has to include the proper method of performing each type of cleaning task in the most efficient manner; the proper use of the chemicals involved and of the equipment.

Oh, yes... the equipment. Is what you have appropriate for the task at hand? Do you need to update or replace outmoded pieces? Today's automatic scrubbers can save time, lower chemical use and have the potential to reduce back strain injuries. We know how expensive injury compensation costs can be.

Develop a floor maintenance plan; follow it and see how you will reduce your costs and increase the life of your floor. You will leave a positive perception with all your clients, visitors and staff.

