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Travertine and Marble Limestone Maintenance PROTECTION, NEW INSTALLATION, PRE-SEALING AS A GROUT RELEASE

These types of surfaces are porous and can absorb stains from many items, including, without limitation, the pigment in some grouts. To ensure the best possible installation, a very high quality penetrating sealer designed for travertine and marble limestone should be applied in accord with manufacturer's instructions.

Use as a grout release before and after grouting to provide stain resistance during and following process. To pre-seal as a grout release, apply sealer using a brush applicator or clean white cotton towel. Saturate the surface, being careful not to allow sealer into the open, ungrouted joints.

For the most porous surfaces, a second and, maybe, a third application should be applied after the first has dried sufficiently. Remember; follow your sealer manufacturer's instructions.

SEALING AND THE NATURAL LOOK: If you are trying to retain the natural look of the stone, consider stopping at this point and putting the area into service. This type of finish will require the least amount of maintenance and is recommended in high traffic and food areas for maximum stain and slip protection.

COLOR ENHANCEMENT: For color enhancement, we recommended a high quality color enhancer be applied in accord with manufacturer's instructions. Colorizers and enhancers are designed to enhance the natural color and texture of all textured stone material.

FLOOR COATING / WAX / WATER SPOTS – REMOVAL: To remove existing solvent based floor coatings and/or waxes use a heavy duty cleaner designed for this purpose. Follow manufacturer's instructions for use on travertine and marble limestone.

LIGHT CLEANING FOR THE NATURAL LOOK: Light cleaning can be done as needed by using a good quality pH neutral cleaner designed for travertine and marble limestone, and doing so in accord with manufacturer's instructions.

- 1) Start with the recommended dilution ratio for your neutral cleaner and clean water and progress to a stronger dilution ratio if needed. Allow solution to stand for 10 to 20 minutes, keeping it wet with the solution, agitating periodically with a medium aggressive floor brush.
- 2) Extract all dirty remains with an approved wet vacuum system.
- 3) Always rinse area with clean water to eliminate any streaks or residue buildup on the surface until the flooring rinses clean. Natural stone soap may also be used as an alternative to neutral cleaner in ongoing maintenance.

As always, be sure to select a high quality product designed for travertine and marble limestone. Stone soap will clean and protect in one step while adding a slight patina to the finish.

- 4) Add stone soap to your mop water and proceed in accord with the manufacturer's instructions. No rinsing may be required, and stone soap may be used as often as desired.
 - 5) If the finish starts to look dull or dirty, a deep cleaning periodically (weekly, monthly, quarterly) may be necessary.
- 3) Use either a neutral cleaner or a heavier duty cleaner as is directed by the manufacturer's instructions. Agitate with the appropriate hand brush or floor brush and an electric powered floor machine, extracting all the dirty remains with an approved wet-dry vacuum.

MAINTAINING TRAVERTINE STONE IN SNOW AND ICE

Most homeowners would agree that ice and snow are an inconvenience to deal with in our day to day lives. Whether taking their toll on the roof of a house, the operation of a vehicle or the vegetation in a garden, extreme weather conditions are a major consideration for our homes. So it stands to reason that we would also be concerned with how our natural stone tiles and pavers would hold up as seasons change.

The effect of freezing weather on travertine stone and marble limestone products that have been installed on an outdoor deck or patio is a complicated subject. When choosing stone for your outdoor projects there are several factors to consider before you make a decision. Remember, the answers are in the details.

First, it is important to understand that if in snow country; no stone will hold up to foot traffic over snow that turns to ice. These conditions will damage any stone or masonry product. The snow must be removed before the stone surface is walked upon. Proper

sealing with an excellent quality sealer is mandatory. The grout applied is also a significant component for success or failure.

The next big issue is the application of the stone. The stone must be installed on a grade/slope; which has adequate drainage, avoiding any puddles or standing water over the full area in discussion. We at *Authentic Durango Stone*[™] believe that all customers should be made aware of the facts. The truth of the matter is that if installed on grade, or below grade, even with proper drainage and snow removal, some natural stone tiles may show damage over time. Stone is a natural product, with many variables, but proper installation will always be a major factor.

A final detail to consider is whether or not the stone been subjected to an ASTM Freeze Thaw test. For the unfamiliar, this test simply certifies that the prescribed series of freeze thaw cycles established by the ASTM were applied to the test material. The findings state that no damage or degradation was noticed or that damage and/or degradation was noticed, then to what degree the damage is observed. In case you were wondering, the *Authentic Durango Stone*[™] products that have been tested for freeze thaw and all passed.

Though certainly a plus, a blanket statement that a stone is freeze thaw stable is far from saying that the stone will last forever. All the factors mentioned above must also be carefully considered when you are deciding to add the beauty of travertine and marble limestone products to your home. This set of variables make a universal answer to the question, will *Authentic Durango Stone*[™] withstand all cold weather conditions? When the details stated are accomplished, yes it will, yet some may fail over the years, anyway. We are happy to consult on the details of any project, to find the right questions, so the accurate answers may be known. You can reach our stone professionals by calling 602-438-1001 or visiting www.durangostone.com.