

STONE FACTS AND THE TRUTH ABOUT SEALERS

15 YEAR SEALERS?

WHY MUST STONE BE SEALED?

All natural stone is riddled with interconnected capillary channels that act like a sponge absorbing liquids. Therefore, sealing stone is essential to protect the stone from stains, dulling, oxidation, water intrusion and ultimately costly repair.

WHAT TYPE OF SEALER SHOULD BE USED?

The type of stone, finish and location are vital factors in choosing the correct sealer. As stone care professionals with over 25 years of experience, we can recommend and apply the sealant best suited for any application.

HOW CAN YOU TELL IF STONE REQUIRES SEALING?

A simple test is to pour a small puddle of water (about 3 inches in diameter) on the surface in several locations and let it sit for 30 minutes. Blot the water up. If you see a dark mark or ring, it indicates that the water has penetrated the stone and it is time to re-seal. Signs of wear, discoloration or dulling are also indicators that it's time to re-seal.

THE TRUTH ABOUT 15-YEAR 'STAIN-PROOF' SEALERS.

A few '15-year' sealants are some of the best chemically engineered sealers available. They penetrate deeply into the stone and repel both oil and water well. However, like all sealers, '15-year' sealers cannot prevent etching and unfortunately, they do not prevent stains for 15 years either. No stone expert would condone waiting 15 years between sealer applications, especially in areas such as showers where the build-up of soap scum and water deposits lead to dulling and

oxidization of the stone finish, ultimately requiring professional restoration within a few short years.

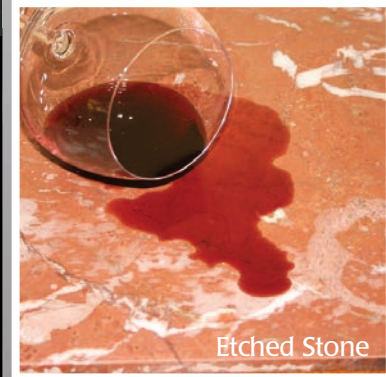
Not surprisingly, companies that market 15-year sealants tend to focus their guarantees on granite counter tops as granite is very dense, non-absorbent and not readily stained. It greatly limits their liability in making such bold 15-year 'stain-proof' warranty claims. However, most natural stone floors are not granite, instead travertine, limestone and marble are the most popular materials used. These types of stone perpetually wear, exposing new pours especially in high traffic areas such as in front of the kitchen sink or refrigerator. No sealer, no matter how effective could possibly protect floors from staining or from becoming soiled for a 15 years as claimed.

Depending on the type of floor and their lifestyle most home-owners have their floors cleaned and sealed once every 4-5 years. Once the stone is cleaned it is always advisable to re-seal, thus maintaining a "sealed tight" surface to protect the stone.

15 year 'stain-proof' warranties offer compensation for stain removal, their confidence in offering this lies in the ease by which most stains can be removed. Any sealer, even if applied correctly can allow some form of penetration or staining. This is referred to as 'wetting the surface' meaning the element that stained the stone is just below the surface and in many cases can be easily removed with a poultice stain remover.



Etched Stone



Etched Stone



Stained Stone



Sealed vs. Unsealed Stone



Sealed Stone

CAN SEALING PREVENT ETCHING?

No, etching is a chemical reaction that occurs when acidic or alkaline solutions erode stone leaving dull marks. There is a common misconception that sealed stone is 'etch-proof.' Some stone suppliers, installation contractors, designers and builders don't fully understand how vulnerable natural stone is to etching, leading to confusion and disappointment for the consumer.

WHAT CAUSES ETCHING?

Coffee, cola, wine, vinegar, fruit juice, many cleaners and personal care products damage vulnerable types of stone such as marble, onyx, travertine, or limestone. Many acids can cause severe damage in seconds.

CAN ETCHED STONE BE REPAIRED?

If your stone is etched, it will require restoration by a professional stone care expert.

HOW CAN ETCHING BE PREVENTED?

The old saying "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" is very relevant when it comes to preventing the damage caused by etching. Conditioning products such as Granite Gold Polish, premium bees or carnauba wax can be applied to add a topical protective barrier that gives you more time to blot up any spills before etching takes place, or at least minimize any damage. These types of topical conditioning products need to be regularly applied to be effective. Please note; it is inadvisable to use any form of polish on floors as they may become slippery.

THE IMPORTANCE OF STONE CARE

Although incredibly durable, natural stone requires proper care to maintain its inherent beauty and to avoid costly repair and replacement.

To keep natural stone looking brilliant, it is best to use products that are specifically formulated to prevent deterioration and enhance the beauty of natural-stone surfaces. My Granite Gold products have been trusted for years to clean and protect any kind of natural or manufactured stone or tile surface.

PELLEGRINO STONE CARE TIPS

- Never use ordinary, everyday household cleaners on natural-stone surfaces. They damage natural stone and can lead to costly repair or replacement.
- It is essential to frequently seal stone to maintain maximum surface protection.
- Use and keep door mats clean to minimize the dirt and micro particles from wearing into stone floors.
- Be sure vacuum attachments do not scratch stone floors. Avoid dragging objects across stone floors. Weekly damp mopping keeps the floor free of abrasive particles.
- Daily or as-needed cleaning of counter tops will reduce dirt, oil penetration and water spotting.
- Using a squeegee on shower walls helps prevent water spotting and soap build up.
- Using polish on counter tops and shower walls will enhance color and sheen and provide added protection to help prevent etching, water spotting and soap scum build-up.
- For exterior stone surfaces, avoid run-off from potted plants as soil and fertilizer can damage stone. Keep drains clear, pooling water can damage stone and cause calcium build up. Annually seal all areas exposed to water such as fountains, pool tile & coping and spillways.

My message is quite simple, natural stone is a big investment and with proper care will last a lifetime. I have been an advocate and a reliable resource in the restoration, care and maintenance of natural stone for over 25 years.

Lenny Pellegrino

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