



NATIONAL TERRAZZO & MOSAIC ASSOCIATION

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TECHNICAL BULLETIN #R-5

8/13

(Formerly TB#65-A, 65-B)

MAINTENANCE OF EXTERIOR RUSTIC TERRAZZO

This bulletin suggests a maintenance procedure for use on the textured surface of rustic terrazzo. In most cases, this application is on an exterior surface, so this bulletin only deals with exterior maintenance.

The composition of the rustic terrazzo topping is a combination of cement, aggregates, sand, and water. The NTMA guide specifications indicate that upon final cleaning of the rustic terrazzo surface, a suitable acrylic or non-yellowing clear aliphatic polyurethane urethane solvent-based sealer be applied to protect and enhance the aesthetics.

Exposure to the elements of rain and wind alone usually keeps the rustic surface reasonably clean. However, if the rustic surface becomes littered with dirt and debris, a vacuum or an air blower should suffice in removing most of the loose foreign matter.

The cleaning is quite simple. Use any type of machine scrubbing equipment with a coarse, stiff-bristled brush attachment. Remove the foreign matter by passing over the surface several times in the presence of a good cleaner and water. Follow by rinsing with clean water and allowing the surface to dry.

Upon completion of the installation of rustic terrazzo, the terrazzo contractor will usually apply a sealer. In most cases, the sealer will be an acrylic type, but on certain rustic installations, a clear non-yellowing aliphatic polyurethane type sealer is necessary to provide a longer time span before having to recoat the surface. The sealer on the rustic surface not only provides aesthetic value, but it also protects the aggregate and matrix from foreign matter impregnation. The high points of the textured surface will take most of the abuse from foot or auto traffic and the sealer will eventually abrade. The crevices between the aggregate will take no abuse from foot or auto traffic and, therefore, the longevity of the sealer in these areas is considerably greater.

The requirements for applying additional sealers, normally several years between applications, depend on the aesthetics desired. If an additional coat of sealer is to be applied, be sure the surface is clean and dry before application; prepare rustic terrazzo surface per sealer manufacturer's written recommendations.

CAUTION: Do not use chemicals or acids on this surface for cleaning purposes unless you have experience using them. Ignoring this caution can result in damage to your rustic terrazzo.

Ice melting chemicals and/or salt should not be used on exterior rustic terrazzo to avoid damage to the cement/aggregate surface.

If an ice melting chemical or salt was allowed to remain on an unsealed surface it could erode the cement matrix and even dislodge the aggregate from the surface.

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