

APPLICATION TECHNIQUE FOR A PENETRATING SEALER

Typically, new Mexican Saltillo tile has varying density and absorption characteristics across its face because of how it was manufactured. A typical absorption rate for this tile would be 25% in the center - dropping to 15% toward the edges. Next to tile is the grout which has an absorption rate that would be approximately 10%.

If you paint on a sealer, you have given every square inch of this surface the same amount of liquid which means the areas that require significantly more sealer do not receive it. In other words, the tile needs more sealer than the grout needs. When sealing slate or quarry tile it is the grout that needs more sealer than the tile.

By pouring the sealer onto the floor, you create a puddle on the floor and each square inch of surface immediately starts to absorb what it needs. The excess is then pushed (using a broom brush) to the next section and more sealer is poured into the new area. This procedure, no matter the variances in absorption rate, allows each square inch to receive the amount of sealer that is needed. This technique of sealer application gets the job done with fewer applications in a shorter time. **Time costs more than sealer.**

Absorption of sealer into highly porous materials can be reduced by waiting a minimum of 3 hours between applications. The first application then has an opportunity to harden and "float" the second application. The sealers are formulated for this type of application with a good balance of drying time vs. working time. You will have plenty of time to apply the material, but it will dry rapidly enough to allow foot traffic as soon as possible.

The benefits of this application technique of FOXFIRE sealers are:

- Penetration and bonding below the surface. Sealer can't peel. With a solvent-based sealer, glue down and bond layers might separate (i.e. slate)

- Strengthens and densifies a soft material (i.e. Mexican tile)

- Creates a barrier below the surface that will "breathe out" water vapor, but stop the upward migration of efflorescence salts.

- Better bonding of any coloring treatments.

If there exist any conditions that you are not aware of now, but could show up later, you have already minimized the risk with this application technique.