

## Commercial Maintenance

Proper, consistent carpet maintenance is critical to extend the life of your carpet and to sustain an optimum performance and appearance level and a healthy indoor environment. We encourage facility managers, designers, maintenance personnel and any others responsible for commercial carpet maintenance to develop and sustain a complete maintenance program for all commercial facilities.

### Maintenance Plan

Plan a maintenance program before installation so such factors as budget, personnel and areas of special consideration can be taken into account. Maintenance personnel are advised to:

1. Obtain detailed floor plan of facility.
2. Identify areas of heavy soiling:
  - **Track-off Regions:** Areas where carpet collects tracked-in soil from the outdoors or from hard-surfaced floors. Track off regions average 90 square feet (6 x 15) at building entrances, 10 square feet (2 x 5) at internal doorways, and 40 square feet (5 x 8) in corridors six feet wide.
  - **Congested Channels:** A concentrated channel of foot traffic, such as a doorway, stairwell or drinking fountain area. A congested channel averages three feet around a doorway to 10 feet around elevators.
  - **Traffic Lanes:** Areas with the largest amount of foot traffic.

A complete and effective program should include three maintenance categories: preventative, daily and periodic.

#### 1. Preventative maintenance

Preemptive measures can be taken to reduce the effects of soil:

- **Entry Mats:** Placed in entryways and elevators, they will collect dirt before it reaches the carpeted area. Assure that the mats cover the distance of several footsteps.
- **Color Selection:** Select color appropriate to traffic areas and local soil conditions. Medium colors, tweeds and patterned carpets hide soil, while lighter colors mask fading.

#### 2. Daily maintenance

- **Vacuuming:** Vacuuming is the most important and most cost-effective element of an efficient maintenance program. Vacuuming can remove more than 80 percent of dry soil on a daily basis. Vacuuming should be scheduled according to the amount of potential soil buildup of a particular area.

The general recommendations for vacuuming frequency are as follows:

- Heavy traffic areas: Daily
  - Medium traffic areas: Twice weekly
  - Light traffic areas: Once or twice weekly
- **Vacuuming Equipment:** Two types of vacuum cleaning equipment are

available for daily maintenance of commercial installations. They are:

- a. Heavy-duty, wide track machine for wide, open areas. Should have powerful suction and an enclosed, high-efficiency particulate filtration bag and be equipped with adjustable cylindrical brushes to whip embedded soil to the surface.
- b. An industrial version of the domestic upright for tighter areas. Should have the same features and should have hose and wand attachments for hard-to-reach areas. A backpack vacuum with a high airflow and high-efficiency filtration provides increased productivity.
  - Periodic pile brushing with a pile lifter vacuum pre-conditions carpet and removes dry, deeply embedded soil from high traffic areas. This can be especially helpful prior to carpet cleaning.

### 3. Extraction Cleaning

Periodical scheduled extraction cleaning will remove accumulated soil not removed by regular vacuuming and spot removal. We suggest a monthly or as needed cleaning of transition areas, track-off regions and congested channels. Cleaning methods include:

- Absorbent Compound (Dry Extraction)
  - Absorbent Pad or Bonnet
  - Dry Foam
  - Hot Water Extraction (Steam Cleaning)
  - Rotary Shampoo Cleaning
- Use method recommended by the carpet manufacturer.

#### **Spot Cleaning**

Damage from spills can be minimized by immediate action. As soon as a spill occurs, blot with a clean, white, absorbent towel and repeat until the spill is fully absorbed. We recommend using a professional spot removal kit, available from janitorial businesses. These kits contain a variety of cleaning agents, application materials as well as spot removal instructions. Be sure to follow instructions and take proper precautions when using cleaning agents.

Lightweight portable extractors are available for more efficient removal of spills. These portable extractors assist in thoroughly removing spills, rinsing cleaning solutions, and extracting wet spills. It is important to adhere to manufacturer's spot removal instructions to prevent voiding existing warranties. Failure to follow these instructions could result in damaged carpet fibers.