

## Cleaning and Maintaining Cement-based and Silicone Joints

### 1. Cement-based grouting materials

Cement based materials are generally used for grouting surfaces on walls and floors. As the name implies, the binding material is cement - a hard wearing building material although it is not resistant to acid. Not just concentrated acid, but also acid based cleaners (commonly used for removing calcium deposits or limescale) may damage cement-based grouting materials. So-called flex joints are becoming increasingly popular as a measure of making grout lines more resistant. The grouting materials contain synthetics, which provide a slight water repellent effect. This effect makes the groutlines less susceptible to damage; it does not, however, avoid damage. The same is true for groutlines treated with impregnators or other protective treatments.

Please note: this method statement is intended primarily for domestic use. The mechanical wear and the increased cleaning regimen in commercial and industrial situations require a different approach. Further, this method statement can only hold true when a suitable grouting material has been used correctly according to the manufacturer's instructions.

#### **Maintaining: advice for ceramic tiles and grout lines**

Avoid using highly acidic cleaners and limit the use of mildly acidic cleaners such as Lithofin KF Active-Clean to occasional use.

Important: always pre-wet the surface. This measure ensures that the cleaner does not penetrate deeply into the grout lines, but instead cleans the surface.

Dilute Lithofin KF Active-Clean depending on the area to be cleaned (up to approx. 1:15). In most cases, it is sufficient to put one squirt of product on a wet sponge and then wipe down the surface. Sponges with white nylon pads are ideally suited, since the pad will support the cleaner's effectiveness. Rinse the surface with plenty of water until all foam has been washed off.

Please note: neutral or alkaline cleaner will not damage cement based grout lines. These cleaners do not remove calcium deposits, but general and greasy dirt. They are therefore ideally suited for regular maintenance cleaning of tile surfaces in kitchens (e.g. splash backs). These cleaning tasks are greatly facilitated by treating the surface with Lithofin KF Grout Protector.



### 2. Silicone joints

These permanently elastic joints are very resistant, easy to maintain and often treated with fungicide components. To keep the joints hygienically clean, simply include them in the regular cleaning with Lithofin KF Active-Clean.

In case mould or mildew should form, perhaps due to insufficient ventilation, simply clean the joint with Lithofin KF Mildew-Away. In very stubborn cases, you may have to remove the silicone from the joint. Re-grout after an intensive cleaning with Lithofin KF Mildew-Away.

### 3. Epoxy resin

These completely synthetic grouting materials are extremely hard wearing and acid resistant. Due to the complexity of installation and the correspondingly high costs, these materials are used primarily in commercial applications (e.g. swimming pools, technical installations, etc.). Epoxy resin is also commonly used for the floors of showers. Cleaning and maintaining should follow the description above.

If you require advice or are in any way unsure about these instructions, please call our

Technical Support Line at

**AUS: (03) 8552 6000 / NZ: (9) 475 0495**

This information should be considered to be informal and non-binding. The products must be used according to local conditions and materials. Instructions must be read carefully and followed closely. Always test the product in an inconspicuous area. (AUS/NZ5.16gps/4.16)

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