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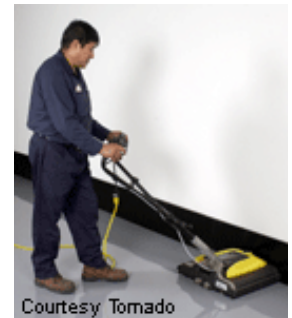
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## Winter floorcare starts at the front door

Winter can be tough on floors, as weather conditions amplify floor care problems and make the need for a floor care maintenance program all the more important.

Below are tips from David Stanislaw, an engineer and floor care expert at Tornado Industries, on how to help keep your winter floors looking their best:



Courtesy Tornado

Combat winter wear with increased maintenance.

**1. Grit control.** "A floor maintenance program should start with grit control, as this reduces labor time and helps prevent slips and falls," Stanislaw said. He also suggested using outside mats to trap particulate soil on shoes, but said more absorbent interior matting is required for the removal of moisture and additional soils.

**2. Increase cleaning frequencies.** Snow and rain in winter months often mean that more moisture is brought into a facility. Therefore, Stanislaw advised increasing mopping or autoscrubbing frequencies to remove soil, keep floors clean, and prevent accidents. "In addition, make sure floors are adequately cleaned before burnishing, especially during the winter months, or grit and dirt will be ground into the finish – causing it to yellow," he said.

**3. Understand ice melter.** Since many areas of the country use chemical ice melters this time of year, cleaning professionals need to be aware of the impact these can have on floors and safety. Sodium chloride, a very common ice melter, is abrasive by nature and can harm interior floors if it is not trapped on mats or removed by cleaning. Calcium chloride, an alternative to sodium chloride, absorbs moisture but can turn it into a greasy film in warm buildings. "Autoscrubbing can be very effective in both situations, removing grit and greasy residue and preventing slips, falls or damaged floors," Stanislaw said.

**4. Prevent finish-adhesion loss.** A final winter floor care problem concerns finish adhesion. A floor finish on marginally porous floors, such as quarry tile, may produce a tough, high-gloss finish in warm months but can suffer finish-adhesion loss in the cold and gritty conditions of winter. "The best ways to prevent this are with mats that stop grit before it enters the facility, with more frequent cleanings, and with autoscrubbing," said Stanislaw. "It may also be necessary to recoat in the winter."

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Stanislaw advised that recoating should be performed when the floor temperature is 50°F (10°C) or warmer, because cracks may develop in the finish and more adhesion problems could result if the temperature is colder.

Winter floor care does take more time and attention. Increasing floor maintenance programs and mechanizing floor work, winter time and throughout the year, can actually help reduce the time necessary to maintain floors, decrease labor costs, and keep floors looking their very best.

"Floors can shine year-round with a proper maintenance program and the correct equipment," Stanislaw concluded.

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