

# RESIDENTIAL COUNTERTOPS CARE & MAINTENANCE MANUAL

---

Version **1.0**

# VERSION HISTORY

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 Purpose.....	3
1.2 Audience .....	3
<b>2 CLEANING .....</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1 Key Features.....	3
2.2 Cleaning Procedures .....	3
2.3 Types of stains & action needed .....	4
2.4 Cleaning stone with a poultice.....	5
2.5 Stone cleaning agents by type of stain .....	5
<b>3 SEALING .....</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1 Type.....	6
3.2 Purpose.....	6
3.3 Procedure .....	7
<b>4 CAUTIONARY GUIDELINES .....</b>	<b>7</b>
4.1 General information .....	7
<b>5 KEY CONTACTS.....</b>	<b>7</b>

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 PURPOSE

The use of this manual is intended to aid in the proper care and maintenance of the installed stonework as completed by Jerry's Floor Store. Use, distribution, and understanding of this manual are the responsibility of the end recipient of the manual.

### 1.2 AUDIENCE

This manual is intended to be used by home owners, building owners, staff, maintenance technicians, and those as needed to properly care and maintain for installed stonework.

## 2 CLEANING

### 2.1 KEY FEATURES

Simple, routine care and maintenance will help preserve the surface's finish and appearance. This manual offers guidelines as well as procedures for stain removal should it be necessary. These are general guidelines, any severe damage should be handled and repaired by a professional

### 2.2 CLEANING PROCEDURES

Clean surfaces with a neutral cleaner, stone soap, or mild dishwashing detergent and warm water. Too much cleaner or soap may leave a film. If a film is present after cleaning, denatured alcohol helps eliminate the film buildup resulting in the original polish. Do not use products that contain lemon, vinegar, or other acids on marble or other calcareous stones. Rinse the surface thoroughly after washing with the soap. Do not use scouring powders or creams; these products contain abrasives that may scratch the stone. Tops may need to have a penetrating sealer applied (see section 3 SEALING).

Cleaning natural stone and solid surface countertops should only be done with specialized cleaners intended for natural stone and/or solid surface use, or as directed below.

For simple spills, blot the spill with a paper towel immediately. Don't wipe the area, it will spread the spill. Flush the area with plain water and mild soap and rinse several times. Dry the area with a soft cloth. Repeat as necessary.

## 2.3 TYPES OF STAINS & ACTION NEEDED

**Oil-based (grease, tar, cooking oil, milk, cosmetics).** An oil-based stain may darken the stone and typically should be chemically dissolved so the source of the stain can be removed. Clean gently with a soft, liquid cleanser or degreaser while adhering to and following any previous guidelines as applicable.

**Organic (coffee, tea, fruit, tobacco, paper, food, urine, leaves).** Organic stains may cause a pinkish-brown stain and may disappear after the source is removed. Follow spill guidelines as directed in 2.2 Cleaning Procedures.

**Metal (iron rust, copper, bronze).** Iron or rust stains are orange or brown in color. Copper and bronze stains appear as green or muddy-brown and result from the action of moisture on nearby embedded bronze, copper, or brass items. Metal stains must be removed with a poultice. (See section of Making & Using a Poultice). Deep seated, rusty stains are extremely difficult to remove and the stone or solid surface may be permanently stained.

**Biological (algae, mildew, lichens, moss, fungi).** Clean with diluted (1/2 cup in a gallon of water) ammonia, bleach, or hydrogen peroxide. Do not mix bleach and ammonia. This combination produces a toxic and lethal gas.

**Ink (magic marker, pen, ink).** Clean with bleach, hydrogen peroxide (light colored stone), lacquer thinner, or acetone (dark colored stone).

**Paint.** Small amounts can be removed with lacquer thinner or scraped off carefully with a razor blade. Heavy paint coverage should be removed only with commercial "heavy liquid" paint stripper available from hardware stores and paint centers. These strippers normally contain caustic soda or lye. Do not use acids or flame tools to strip paint.

Paint strippers can etch the surface. Follow the manufacturer's directions taking care to flush the area thoroughly with clean water. Protect yourself with rubber gloves and eye protection. Work only in well ventilated areas.

Normally, latex or acrylic paint will not cause staining. Oil based paints, linseed oil, putty, caulks and sealants may cause oily stains.

**Scratches and Nicks.** Surface scratches may be buffed with dry 0000 grade steel wool. Deeper scratches and nicks should be repaired and re-polished by a professional granite fabricator. Any attempt to repair scratches and nicks requiring professional assistance may result in a voided warranty.

## 2.4 CLEANING STONE WITH A POULTICE

A poultice is a liquid cleaner or chemical mixed with a white absorbent material to form a paste about the consistency of peanut butter.

The poultice is spread over the stained area to a thickness of about ½" with a wood or plastic spatula, covered with plastic, and left to work for 24 to 48 hours. The liquid cleaner or chemical will draw out the stain into the absorbent material. Poultice procedures may need to be repeated to completely remove a stain.

### **Poultice Materials**

Poultice materials include kaolin, fuller's earth, whiting, diatomaceous earth, powdered chalk, white molding plaster or talc. Approximately one pound of prepared poultice material will cover one square foot. Do not use whiting or iron-type clays such as fuller's earth with acid chemicals.

The reaction will cancel the effect of the poultice. A poultice can also be prepared using white cotton balls, white paper towels or gauze pads.

## 2.5 STONE CLEANING AGENTS BY TYPE OF STAIN

### **Oil Based Stains**

Poultice with baking soda and water or one of the powdered poultice materials and mineral spirits.

### **Organic Stains**

Poultice with one of the powdered poultice materials and 12% hydrogen peroxide (hair bleaching strength) or use acetone instead of the hydrogen peroxide.

### **Iron Stains**

Poultice with diatomaceous earth and a commercially available rust remover. Rust stains are particularly difficult to remove and may require a professional.

### **Copper Stains**

Poultice with one of the powdered poultice materials and ammonia. Biological Stains. Poultice with dilute ammonia OR bleach OR hydrogen peroxide. Do not mix bleach and ammonia. This combination produces a toxic and lethal gas.

### **Applying the Poultice**

Prepare the poultice. If using powder, mix the cleaning agent or chemical to a thick paste the consistency of peanut butter. If using paper, soak in the chemical and let drain. Don't let the liquid drip.

Wet the stained area with distilled water. Apply the poultice to the stained area about ¼ to ½ inch thick and extend the poultice beyond the stained area by about one inch. Use a wood or plastic scraper to spread the poultice evenly. Cover the poultice with plastic and tape the edges to seal it. Allow the poultice to dry for about 24 to 48 hours.

The drying process is what pulls the stain out of the stone and into the poultice material. After about 24 hours, remove the plastic and allow the poultice to dry. Remove the poultice from the stain. Rinse with distilled water and buff dry with a soft cloth.

Use the wood or plastic scraper if necessary to lift the poultice off the stain. Repeat the poultice application if the stain is not removed. It may take up to five applications for difficult stains.

## **3 SEALING**

### **3.1 TYPE**

A penetrating sealer specifically formulated for use on natural stone should be applied once a year for optimal appearance and durability of your stone. Avoid using a stone sealer that does not penetrate the stone. Sealing is not necessary for solid surface material.

### **3.2 PURPOSE**

Natural stone comes pre-sealed, but sealing annually or as recommended creates a semi-protective barrier to common stains and aides in proper,

regular care and maintenance.

### **3.3 PROCEDURE**

Follow instructions for use from the manufacturer for correct application procedures.

## **4 CAUTIONARY GUIDELINES**

### **4.1 GENERAL INFORMATION**

Care for natural stone and solid surface tops requires daily attention. Prompt attention should be given to any irregular use which could alter the appearance of the finished product. Spills, stains, improper use, etc. should be addressed immediately.

Avoid allowing acidic contents to be left on the surface for any amount of time to avoid etching. Harsh cleaning products or abrasive cleaners (other than any mentioned in this manual) can remove the polished shine.

Although the natural stone and solid surfaces are extremely hard and durable, improper use or ineffective support of the tops may damage the finished product (see warranty).

Natural stone and solid surface tops are heat resistant, not heat proof. It is recommended to minimize any exposure to extreme heat as it could result in thermal shock causing cracks and possible, permanent damage. Such items as hot pans, utensils, appliances, etc. should not be left on the exposed surface for prolonged periods of time.

Tests executed by the Hospitality Institute using e-coli contaminates show granite is 2<sup>nd</sup> only to stainless steel countertops in bacterial resistance.

Never sit or stand on countertop in front of cooktops or sinks, this is the weakest area of your stone and as such the most susceptible to cracking from the weight of a person.

## **5 KEY CONTACTS**

Should any professional assistance be needed in regards to the proper care, maintenance, or repair of any natural stone or solid surface top be necessary and covered under warranty, contact a Jerry's Floor Store representative or a professional fabricator to remedy the situation. Any care, maintenance, or repair not covered under any expressed or implied warranty is done at the discretion of Jerry's Floor Store (see Warranty for more information).