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Five Common Misconceptions about Concrete Floor Maintenance

In advance of its debut at the World of Concrete Expo, the IICRC debunks commonly held falsehoods about cleaning concrete floors

LAS VEGAS—Jan. 27, 2014—With the continued growth of concrete as a chosen flooring material in commercial and residential building properties throughout North America, the challenge to properly maintain the surface increases. In advance of its debut at the World of Concrete Show in Las Vegas, Feb. 2-6, the Institute for Inspection Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC) today identified five commonly held misconceptions about concrete floor maintenance.

“Too often, we run into people who believe that once the concrete floor has been installed, it maintains itself,” said Claudia Lezell, IICRC Standards Hard Surface Division Vice Chair and President of Inspections Too, Inc. and Flooring Technology Institute. “This couldn’t be further from the truth. Like most other hard floor surfaces, concrete maintenance requires a specialized approach that takes several factors into consideration—otherwise, it can fail.”

To assist flooring professionals in better understanding some of the key principles behind concrete floor maintenance, the IICRC developed the following list of commonly held misconceptions:

- **Misconception 1: You don’t need chemicals to maintain concrete floors.** No hard flooring surface cleans itself, including concrete. Chemicals are used to breakdown, remove and clean dirt and debris. Concrete is exposed to the same dirt and debris as any other flooring, so it should be maintained in a similar manner.

- **Misconception 2: All concrete walking surfaces are created equal.** Concrete is either coated or polished. Maintenance of coated concrete will come down to the maintenance of the coating. For example, epoxies, urethanes and acrylics will have their own criteria associated with them. Polished concrete is maintained with abrasives. While much of the
daily maintenance will be similar to other hard floor surfaces, you need to consider the coating before developing a comprehensive maintenance program.

- **Misconception 3: Cleaning staff know how to clean concrete floors.** Depending on who handles cleaning and maintenance responsibilities, there’s a good chance that someone with little to no experience is cleaning concrete floors, including professional cleaning staff. Before you let anyone clean your floors, make sure they have the knowledge and expertise for the job.

- **Misconception 4: Concrete floors will last just as long without any cleaning or maintenance.** If the concrete is coated, the longevity of the floor is dependent on the quality of the coating and how it is maintained. If the concrete is mechanically polished, the longevity is dependent on the methods and how well those methods were executed during the process of polishing. A properly polished concrete floor with bonded abrasives will have reduced maintenance and longer time period in between restorative procedures than traditional flooring surfaces.

- **Misconception 5: Soil loads and the type of soil do not impact how a concrete floor is cleaned.** A concrete floor is no different than any other hard floor surface. The amount of soil and the type of soil will dictate the frequency of and the type of cleaning procedures.

“The maintenance of architectural concrete floors is no different than any other hard floor surface,” added Jim Cuviello, founding member of the Concrete Polishing Association of America and owner of Cuviello Concrete and Terrazzo Polishing. “The foundation of any hard floor maintenance is the same. There are only slight variations in products used from one material to another.”

As an international nonprofit organization, the IICRC sets standards and provides certifications for individuals and companies in the cleaning, inspection and restoration industries. To learn more about the IICRC, visit them at booth #N3051 in the North Hall of the Las Vegas Convention Center during the World of Concrete show or go online at [www.iicrc.org](http://www.iicrc.org).

**About IICRC**
The IICRC is an international, ANSI-accredited standard-development organization (SDO) that certifies individuals in 20+ categories within the inspection, cleaning and restoration industries. Representing more than 54,000 certified technicians and 6,000 Certified Firms in 22 countries, the IICRC, in partnership with regional and international trade associations, represents the entire industry. The IICRC does not own schools, employ instructors, produce training materials, or promote specific product brands, cleaning methods or systems. For more information, visit [www.iicrc.org](http://www.iicrc.org).

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