Excel Floor Care Offers Guidance on Tile and Grout Cleaning for Monsoon Dust and Hard Water

Excel Floor Care, a Gilbert-based tile and grout cleaning specialist, has announced guidance for homeowners in the Phoenix Valley regarding the effects of monsoon dust and hard water minerals on tile grout. The announcement, made on August 20, 2026, addresses the buildup that occurs when dust from seasonal storms combines with mineral-heavy tap water during wet-mopping. The company uses professional cleaning methods and offers a free test area to determine whether grout discoloration is reversible. The release also advises homeowners to remove dust while it is dry and to reduce unnecessary wet-mopping during the monsoon season, which runs from June 15 through September 30 in Arizona.

Background on Monsoon Dust and Hard Water Effects

The Phoenix area experiences significant dust events during the monsoon season. The 2026 PHX-DUST scale, introduced in the announcement, classifies these events across five particulate levels, indicating the range of dust concentrations that can settle on indoor surfaces. This dust, when combined with the mineral content of Phoenix tap water, can lead to discoloration in tile grout. According to the release, Phoenix tap water measures between 9.9 and 16.1 grains per gallon, equivalent to about 170 to 276 milligrams per liter of hardness. The calcium and magnesium in this water can bond with dust particles inside porous grout, forming a mineral crust over time.

Grout, the material that fills the joints between tiles, is inherently porous. This porosity allows moisture and small particles to penetrate its surface. When dust from monsoon storms lands on tile flooring and is then wet-mopped with hard water, the moisture carries minerals into the grout. As the water evaporates, the minerals are left behind, gradually accumulating and creating a visible layer. The release explains that uniform darkening of grout can indicate this accumulation of dust and hard-water minerals rather than permanent damage to the tile itself. This distinction is important for homeowners who may mistake such discoloration for staining that cannot be removed.

How Grout Discoloration Develops

The process of grout discoloration from monsoon dust and hard water involves several steps. During a dust event, fine particulate matter enters homes through doors, windows, and ventilation systems. This dust settles on tile floors and other surfaces. If the floors are then cleaned with water that has high mineral content, the water mixes with the dust on the surface. As the water is absorbed into the grout, it carries both the dust particles and the dissolved

minerals into the porous material. When the water dries, the minerals and dust remain embedded in the grout. Over repeated cleaning cycles, this buildup can become noticeable as a darkened or stained appearance.

The release notes that the mineral crust formed by calcium and magnesium can be particularly stubborn. Unlike simple surface dirt, this crust is chemically bonded to the grout material. Standard cleaning with soap or mild detergents may not remove it, and aggressive scrubbing can damage the grout surface. The guidance from Excel Floor Care emphasizes that addressing the issue requires an assessment to determine the nature of the discoloration. Professional cleaning techniques, such as those used by the company, can often reverse the buildup if the grout has not been permanently damaged.

Professional Assessment and Cleaning Methods

Excel Floor Care offers a free test area to help homeowners assess whether grout discoloration is reversible. This test involves cleaning a small, inconspicuous section of the grout using professional equipment and cleaning solutions. By comparing the cleaned area with the surrounding grout, homeowners can see whether the discoloration is surface-level or has penetrated deeper. This assessment is a key part of the tile cleaning process, as it helps determine the appropriate cleaning approach. If the discoloration is caused by mineral crust and dust accumulation, professional cleaning can often restore the grout to its original appearance.

The company uses professional-grade cleaning equipment that can apply controlled pressure and heat, along with specialized cleaning agents designed to break down mineral deposits. These methods are more effective than household cleaning products for addressing the specific combination of dust and hard water minerals. The free test area provides a risk-free way for homeowners to see the potential results before committing to a full cleaning service. This approach is part of the broader guidance Excel Floor Care offers for managing tile and grout during and after monsoon season.

Preventive Measures for Homeowners

The release advises homeowners to take preventive steps to reduce the accumulation of dust and minerals in grout. One key recommendation is to remove dust while it is dry, using a dry mop or vacuum cleaner with a soft brush attachment. This prevents the dust from being mixed with water during mopping, which is when the binding process begins. Another suggestion is to reduce unnecessary wet-mopping during the monsoon season. When mopping is necessary, using water with lower mineral content, such as distilled or filtered water, can help minimize the amount of calcium and magnesium introduced to the grout.

These measures can slow the buildup of mineral crust and extend the time between professional cleanings. However, the release notes that even with preventive care, some accumulation is inevitable due to the high mineral content of Phoenix tap water and the frequency of dust events. The uniform darkening of grout that results from this accumulation is not necessarily a sign of permanent damage, and professional assessment can determine whether restoration is possible. This is where the concept of grout restoration becomes relevant. Grout restoration, in the context of this announcement, refers to the process of removing accumulated mineral crust and dust from grout using professional techniques. The company's free test area helps homeowners understand whether grout restoration is feasible for their specific situation.

Grout restoration is a specialized service that addresses the unique challenges posed by the local environment. The combination of high mineral content in water and frequent dust events creates conditions that are not typical in other regions. For homeowners in the Phoenix Valley, understanding the cause of grout discoloration is the first step toward maintaining the appearance of their tile floors. The guidance from Excel Floor Care provides a framework for assessing the condition of grout and determining the appropriate response, whether through preventive measures or professional cleaning.

Industry Context

The challenges described in the announcement are specific to areas with hard water and seasonal dust, but the principles of grout maintenance apply broadly. Grout is a common material in tile installations, and its porous nature makes it susceptible to staining from a variety of sources. In regions with hard water, mineral buildup is a frequent issue, and dust from construction, agriculture, or natural events can compound the problem. Professional cleaning services have developed techniques to address these specific conditions, using equipment and cleaning agents that are not typically available to homeowners.

The announcement from Excel Floor Care reflects a growing awareness of the need for specialized cleaning services that account for local environmental factors. By offering guidance on prevention and assessment, the company aims to help homeowners make informed decisions about their tile and grout maintenance. The free test area is a practical tool that allows homeowners to see the potential results of professional cleaning before committing to the full service. This approach reduces the risk of investing in cleaning that may not achieve the desired outcome, especially when the discoloration is caused by factors other than simple dirt.

In summary, the guidance from Excel Floor Care addresses a common problem for Phoenix Valley homeowners: the accumulation of monsoon dust and hard water minerals in tile grout. The announcement provides details on the causes of the discoloration, the methods used to

assess its reversibility, and the preventive steps that can reduce buildup. The company's free test area offers a way to evaluate the condition of grout before undergoing professional cleaning. For homeowners dealing with darkened grout, this information can help them understand whether the discoloration is a temporary issue that can be resolved with professional cleaning or a more permanent condition requiring grout replacement.