

white carrara marble tile shower

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I moved into a new house September 07, with a white carrara marble tile master bath shower. After two months of using it, there were dark gray spots in the corners and surrounding the drain. The entire shower floor had cracked grout around the perimeter, and water had leaked under the tile and also went up the wall to knee height. The builder has now ripped out the bottom of the shower and rebuilt the shower floor, but after two weeks of using it now, it has a small crack in the grout again, starting in the same corner. The tile is now dark again in that corner, and we think it is a matter of time before the water again starts going up the wall. The tile is sealed (don't know what sealer was used, and now they won't return my phone calls!). I have called another contractor to come fix the grout, but I'm wondering if we need to reseal the floor again -- the contractor said because of heavy wear and tear of a shower (water, shampoo products, etc) that the sealer may be wearing down or something. Does your MB4 work for marble showers as a waterproofer? If so, how often do I reseal? I need something to block the water from getting behind the tile! Thanks. Tamara

Dear Tamara:

Good grouting is paramount in a shower stall. Obviously the tile setter that your GC uses is not very good at that. Your concern is more than legit and you have to have that grout attended to.

It is my understanding that you did that through a different contractor, but you made the big mistake of applying a sealer to your stone. Especially considering that you most likely have some water already behind your tiles, sealing was the last thing that you needed to do.

As a general rule it is never a good idea to seal stone in a wet environment, no matter how many people tell you differently. As you obviously know, I do make and sell an excellent impregnating sealer, but you will never see me join the choir of the "sealing cult", because I know that 1000 wrong don't make a right.

Besides, inasmuch that you want to block the water from going behind your tiles (and rightly so) it is not by applying an impregnating sealer that you're going to accomplish that. (You don't really think that water is going through the stone, do you?!...) I, for instance, solved that problem in my own marble shower stall by using caulk instead of grout. That's one heck of a "sealer", alright!

So, make sure that your grout lines are done right and start getting some real stone intelligence instead of the sealing thing.

The issue of what you'll be doing day in and day out to your stone is "as it should be intuitive" vastly more important than its sealing (if and when possible and/or advisable) and it's all too often neglected. As you can tell by reading many of this site's postings, you're not likely to get good information about routine care from your dealer or installer. Don't become another statistic! By logging into the Helpful Hints section of our website at: http://www.mbstone.com/HH_promo/helpful_hints.htm, you will be able to get the short version of our maintenance guidelines at no charge. The full version of it "a 7-page document considered by many as an industry benchmark" is available in pay-per-download format in our Educational Literature section at: <http://www.mbstone.com/literature/literature.htm>.

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Thank you

Ciao and good luck,

Maurizio Bertoli

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