

# Doctored stone? Black absolute granite rings and stains

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Q. About two weeks ago I had "Black Absolute" granite countertops, polished finish, installed. It is my understanding and experience that Black Absolute does not, and should not be sealed. I now have what is commonly referred to as "ghost rings" and water spots all over the place. The spots and rings are most noticeable when viewed from directly above and totally invisible when viewed from an extreme angle. The polished mirror like finish does not seem to be effected when viewed at an angle.

I have read much about the fraudulent activities of some fabricators known as "doctoring" in an attempt to pass off inferior stones as true "Black Absolute." It's my understanding that the cause of these rings and spots could be from 3 things done by the fabricator or supplier:

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The fabricators used a sealer when they shouldn't have, thus creating a film on the granite and the rings are caused by the resulting film being etched or removed in some way.

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The granite has a mineral such as calcium as is found in stone coming from places other than south Africa, which is reactive with acids and the stone is being etched

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The stone has been doctored in some way to look like "Black Absolute" with dyes or polish and that dye or polish is being bleached resulting in the lighter color.

My question is 4 fold:

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Are there any possible causes I have left out?

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What can be done to rectify this problem and who is legally responsible for it?

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I have read somewhere on the web that the only stone legally allowed to be represented as "black absolute" comes from South Africa. Is this true? If so can you elaborate or point to a source for clarification.

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What should my next step be? I have contacted the fabricator and I won't go into it but suffice it to say it involved steel wool and soap dishes! didn't sound advisable so here I am. This all is taking place in Chicago Illinois if that matters from a legal standpoint and the fabricator is a very large and supposedly reputable one from the area. Your collective advice is much appreciated as I have sunk my last bottom dollar into this rehab and the well over fifty square foot countertop is the centerpiece and biggest selling point. -Bill A. Hi Bill,

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You seem to have most of the reasons, but it does sound like the stone has been dyed. It may not be the fault of the fabricator. They may have been duped as well. However, it is reasonable to expect them to stand behind their products.

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The only way to 'As far as who is legally responsible is difficult to tell since it could have been dyed at the factory in China or India, etc. You can go after the importer and the fabricator as well, but I am not licensed to practice law so you would have to consult an attorney.

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No, this is not true. There are several sources in India as well as Africa. Secondly, this is not a legal issue. At

present, the stone industry does not have any laws concerning the sale or distribution of stone. This is one of the reasons we stress so highly that the first consideration in stone care is to be very selective with your fabricator.

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Your next step would be to confront the fabricator and see if he will replace the stone. If not then I would go see your attorney.

Dr. Fred

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