

To Seal or Not to Seal

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Q. Hi Thoroughly enjoy your informative web site. Like a lot of others, I'm confused about whether or not I should "seal" or impregnate my Travertine tile. I'm using tumbled Travertine in a shower installation but only as a decorative wall accent. It will not be in the direct water spray, but obviously will get "wet". My installer suggested I check with the manufacturer to make sure I don't void the warranty. I contacted them and they suggested I seal it, not only upon installation, but every 1 or 2 years, "whenever I notice water is no longer beading on the stone". They also said Travertine is a porous stone. Of course, I'm sealing the grout joints. Someone even told me I should seal the Travertine prior to grouting and then again after grouting. The rest of the shower installation is ceramic tile. So, should I join the "Sealer Cult" or not? Thanks for any help you can give me. Also, like another post, I'm not able to download the pay per view stone care guide. The website directs me to an error page every time. Any suggestions?

A. Hi Marie,

Glad that you like the site and hope its helping you.

Lets get right to the point. sealing issues are just plain confusing. Everyone has an opinion on sealers and they are all different. Heres my take on this issue. While I work on alot of travertine most seem to exhibit non porous characteristics some may show signs of porosity. The best thing to do is test the stone by simply placing a palm sized puddle on the surface of a few pieces. Let the water dwell there for 10 minutes. Then wipe away with paper towel

and that will tell you how porous or not it is. Of course if it porous it will show darker spots where the water is. Then it should be sealed. However you are talking about vertical stone on a wall where what would be staining the stone.

Consider that gravity will pull most mass down from the wall anyhow. I am in alot of homes and I cant remember seeing stains on a tumbled travertine wall in a bathroom.

I dont think it needs to be sealed. The flip side to that is it is your stone and if you can seal it properly without over applying it who am I to tell you not to do it. It wont hurt the stone or the grout lines. Heck you could even buy our sealer its water based and easy to work with. Dont worry we wont send you one of those so your part of the sealing cult letters either- really I promise. Properly applied and maintained our sealer will last ten years guaranteed. You wont have to do it once a year. Hey tell that guy to call us

we need a better salesman for sure. about the site go to www.mbstone.com and you will find the literature there.

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