

Popping travertine

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Q. Hello, We have travertine in our master bath including the shower walls. We had the toilet the tank break causing some flooding on the bathroom floor. We removed the water in about 10 minutes but tiles looked a bit 'damp'. The next morning we woke up to find popped up tiles as if they had expanded. What might have caused this and how do we prevent this from happening when we get the floor retiled? Interestingly the shower wall tiles never had a problem even though they get wet everyday.

A. Hard to say exactly without seeing the floor, but here's my guess. The tiles on the floor may have been somewhat loose already and the epic adventure you had in the bathroom was the final straw and they popped up.

Travertine is a very dense stone and won't hold much moisture. If the water got under the stone due to poor condition of grout and or caulking it is possible that caused the pop. The tiles in the shower stall get wet every day but they stay in good shape because there is no water getting behind them. When you re-lay the stone make sure you remove all the old setting material. Then reset using proper setting material, regrout and caulk where needed.

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