

Cracks in Granite Countertop

Authored by: **Maurizio Bertoli** [mailto:mail@mbstone.com]

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Dear Maurizio, Antique Brown granite was installed in our kitchen in late March; there were at least seven cracks. The installers returned the next day, to "finish up", refusing to listen to our concerns about the cracks. They then made the situation worse, "polishing" the cracks to a matte finish; they have not been back, as we are refusing them entry to try again, which they would like to do. I had a builder look at the work last week, and he said that the granite had been installed with the cracks; he agrees that it has to come out, but I am at a loss as to how to get it out. (We were the contractors for our remodel.) I no longer trust the installers, disliking their attempts to convince me that the cracks are fissures, and aren't going to grow in size, and because one of the seams has also cracked: I can see air through it. I have no confidence in their ability to remove it without damaging the cabinets or the undermounted sink. They contacted me this week about trying to repair the cracks again via e-mail; I've not responded. They have our deposit, half of the estimate, but want the rest, which breaks my heart. I've not contacted a lawyer or the Better Business Bureau, but I am wondering how I should move on from here, and would appreciate any suggestions. You have often commented (at findstone.com) about how important it is to get references. I agree, but they aren't always foolproof: I got three positive ones about this company. Thank you again, Sherry Llewellyn

Dear Sherry:

The way I see it, the issue can't be solved mechanically. Nobody can repair permanently those many cracks. Therefore we're in legal territory.

Your first move is to consult with a bona-fide stone reestoration contractor in your area, who will assess the real nature of the problem and suggest a possible remedy - if any (which I doubt). If the conclusions of the expert are what I think they will be, I suggest you to write a certified letter to the fabricator demanding the replacement of the whole installation, making absolutely clear that you will not accept any compromise.

Two things can happen:

1. They will respond and agree to replace.
2. They will not respond, or offer some band-aid solution that you will not even bother answering to.

In case 1. you're legally bound to let them do the replacement.

I know how you feel about their professional abilities - and I may even agree with you - but the law does not consider someone's feelings.

After all, if they will damage the cabinets they will be fully responsible for that. (Besides, they do have liability insurance, don't they?)

In case 2. it's filing time! You don't really need an attorney. That's Small Claim court territory, or, at best, Special Civil Part of Superior Court (roughly same procedure as Small Claim, but with a higher limit. It depends on the state and/or the county). Any court clerk will help you with the easy filing of the appropriate paperwork.

Within 3 to 4 weeks you will be in front of a Judge with plenty pictures **and your expert**. You will state your case keeping it simple, and get the ruling.

"they aren't always foolproof: I got three positive ones about this company."

Well, only seldom you will deal with fool-proof situation in real life... :-(

May I ask you now to please read and e-sign our Statement of Purpose at: <http://www.marblecleaning.org/purpose.htm> ? :-)

Ciao and good luck,

Maurizio Bertoli

