



**Guidelines for Maintaining and Stripping
Hard Surface Floors That Contain or May Contain Asbestos**
(Source: OSHA and EPA Guidelines)
As of January 1, 2003

By Roger McFadden
Senior Scientist
Staples

- Treat all vinyl or composition tile floors installed before 1980 as if they contain asbestos unless it is verified that they do not contain asbestos.
- EPA prefers that floor tiles containing asbestos remain in place and not be removed unless absolutely necessary. Keeping tiles in place and using proper floor care procedures is preferred over replacing tiles. If tiles are removed then appropriate abatement procedures must be followed.
- Limit frequency of wax stripping and finish applications.
- Floor care personnel should be properly trained as to asbestos awareness at least once yearly.
- Floor tiles should be KEPT WET during all cleaning and wax stripping operations.
- Use low speed floor machines with less than 300 RPM or use mop-on and mop-off wax strippers when stripping floors that contain asbestos.
- Use the least abrasive pad possible during floor scrubbing, stripping or burnishing.
- NEVER buff or burnish an unwaxed, unfinished or uncoated floor containing asbestos.
- Buffing and burnishing is allowed when adequate amounts of finish are present.
- Use a semi-permanent sealer to reduce the chance of asbestos fibers from escaping into the surrounding air.