

West Coast Maintenance Materials Co.

337 S. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90020
Phone: 213-387-2245 | Fax: 213-387-8197 | Email: info@westcoastmm.com

Standard Cleaning Terms

Abrasive Cleaners - Cleaning agents consisting of granular materials such as finely ground silica, volcanic ash, powdered feldspar and powdered pumice. Abrasive cleaners may be used periodically to remove discolorations and certain stains from lavatory porcelain and stubborn spots from other surfaces.

Acid Cleaners - Usually formulated to meet a specific problem, acid cleaners include: removing lime encrustations from stools and urinals, citric acid solutions for damp-wiping bronze trim and for no streak washing of stainless steel, and buffered phosphoric compounds for cleaning exterior aluminum trim. Acid cleaners are often employed on a regular cycle to neutralize cleaners that are alkaline.

Alkaline Cleaners - Balanced powdered cleaners composed of alkaline salts such as trisodium phosphate, sodium carbonate, modified soda and sodium metasilicate. Besides their detergent properties, certain alkaline salts have water-softening characteristics and are combined and are combined in the cleaning product for that purpose. Such products would be above 7.0 on the pH scale (see pH).

All-Purpose Cleaner (APC) - Powder or liquid cleaner which is designed to clean and deodorize in one operation.

Ammonia - Alkaline chemical used for cleaning and to increase cleaning abilities of detergents and wax removers. May be used as a pH stabilizer for floor finishes and detergents.

Biodegradability - Susceptibility of a detergent to decompose during sewage treatment as result of bacteriological action on organic matter, which reduces foaming.

Carpet - Floor covering, installed wall-to-wall, manufactured from various types or combinations of fabric.

Cleanability - Ease with which an object or surface may be returned to its original condition after application of soil removal procedures.

Concentrated Cleaner - Any cleaner or material at full strength, normally requiring dilution for use.

Concrete Floor - Also known as a Hard Floor. Concrete is a mixture of cement, sand and crushed stone or gravel and water. It sets as a solid mass due to the chemical reaction of the cement with water.

Concrete Seal - Protective coating applied to new or old concrete floor to harden, seal and reduce dusting.

Counter Brush - Brush of horsehair or fibers with extended hand grip of hardwood; used for sweeping in corners, hard-to-reach areas and for sweeping collected soil and debris into dust pan.

Curing - Total period of time for complete setting of floor finishes. From 24-48 hours may be required for total cure. Buffing may speed curing time.

Detergents - cleansing agents designed to reduce the work requirement. Detergents are synthesized chemically from a variety of raw materials derived from petroleum, fatty acids and other sources, available in granular and liquid form, and in pre-measured tablets and packets. The multiple uses of detergents include wetting, penetrating, dispersing, emulsifying and suspending soil, making it removable by rinsing.

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Disinfectant - Chemical which destroys vegetative forms of microorganisms, but not necessarily bacterial spores.

Dry Mopping - Procedure by which a floor is cleaned with a dry mop treated with a dust controllant.

Drying Time - Time required for drying of a coating applied to a floor.

Dusting - Surface-cleaning operation to remove light soil. If a treated cloth is used, procedure is normally called dry dusting. If cloth moistened with water is used, it is normally called damp dusting. Also, as applied to a concrete floor surface, dusting means the forming of fine dry particles of the concrete mixture because of foot traffic. Usually occurs due to improper curing or maintenance.

Fast Floors - Floor surfaces that are slippery and may not meet the standard coefficient for slip-resistant as recognized by Underwriters Laboratory.

Feather-In - To carefully blend a spot in with the surrounding area. For example, in the spot touch-up of floor polishes, the newly applied polish is "feathered-in" to the adjacent area.

Finish - Protective coating used on resilient, concrete and wood floors.

Fixture - Furniture or equipment that is not movable; for example, a plumbing unit such as a stool, urinal or lavatory.

Flash Point - Lowest temperature at which a combustible liquid will give off a flammable vapor, which will burn momentarily when exposed to open flame.

Floor Brush (Broom) - Used for general sweeping of floors. Also called a push broom

Floor Machine - Power-driven machine equipped with scrubbing or polishing brushes (in sizes 12" to 30"), used to remove soil by scrubbing and for polishing floor surfaces.

Germicidal Cleaner - Cleaner that also destroys bacteria.

Gloss (Initial or Buffed) - Brightness or luster. Initial gloss is the gloss of a floor finish immediately upon drying. If finish is buffed, it is called a buffed gloss.

Grain Hardness - One grain of water hardness equals 17ppm of calcium carbonate. Water in the United States ranges from less than one hardness to as high as 50 grains.

Grout - Concrete with small aggregates of being poured to fill small spaces.

Grouting - Concrete binder used to install ceramic tile. Bricks, etc.

Hard Water - Water that contains any amount of chemical compound, which interferes with the ability of soap to form a lather. Compounds usually found are calcium and magnesium salts with small amounts of iron and aluminum. The amount of hardness is reported either as parts per million (342ppm) or grains per gallon. To convert ppm to grains per gallon, divide ppm by 17.1.

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Heavily Obstructed - Degree of obstruction to cleaning operations when 50 percent or more of the gross floor area is occupied by furniture or equipment.

Heavy Mopping - A floor cleaning operation using two or more mops and a concentrated solution is applied and picked up from floor area, which is thoroughly rinsed.

Heeling - Method of exerting pressure on a floor machine to remove rubber heel marks or heavily soiled areas.

Horizontal Dusting - Dusting operation performed on surfaces, which are horizontal, or at no more than 45 degrees from level.

Interior Windows - Windows, which are entirely inside a building

Johnny Mop - Yarn mop on a plastic or wood handle approximately 14" long, used for cleaning inside toilet stools and urinals. Also called Acrilan Swab.

Lay-Down and Pickup - Terms used for a wet mopping operation with the following sequence. Place mop in bucket and saturate completely. Place mop in wringer, and let excess run off but do not squeeze. Pull $\frac{3}{4}$ of mop from wringer and squeeze only the end of the mop. Lay-down solution on floor, then return mop to bucket, rinse, wring dry and pickup solution.

Leveling - The property of a floor polish which caused it to flow together and form a smooth surface after it is spread. Brush or applicator marks represent "hills and valleys" and will level out or become uniform in height if the polish levels well. The term also is used to describe how an emulsion, wax or finish adheres to a floor surface.

Light Cleaning - Cleaning operation sufficient only to remove surface soil.

Limited Sweeping - Sweeping of all easily reached floor surfaces.

Liquid Toilet Soap - A true soap made of pure vegetable oil and potash, with or without glycol or alcohol, free from objectionable odor, and forming a satisfactory lather.

Loose Mop - A wet mop partially wrung out so that about 25 percent of the water remains.

Low Sudsing - Describes a product which cleans without forming foam, and which has low surface tension in water but destabilizes air-liquid interactions, and promotes collapse of foam.

Luster - Describes the ability of a surface to reflect natural or artificial light.

Machine-Scrub - To scrub floor surface with manually operated machine.

Machine-Scrub Automatic - To clean floors using an automatic machine equipped with either bristle brushes or abrasive pads that apply friction to the surface where solution has been deposited, then pick up spent solution, soil and finish, and rinse if necessary.

Maintenance - The routine recurring work required to keep a facility in such a condition that it may be continuously used, at its full capacity and efficiency, for its intended purpose.

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Management - Those who have prime authority and responsibility to plan, organize, coordinate and control industrial or institutional activities.

Man-Hour - A unit of work measurement equivalent to the productivity of one worker, working at a normal pace for one hour.

Mass Relamping - Replacement of all incandescent or fluorescent lamps in the general lighting fixtures of a specific area on a scheduled frequency based on average lamp life.

Match Maintenance - A phrase coined to describe a process whereby professional custodians manager's work with professional custodians to achieve the best balance between supplies, equipment, time and service.

Mechanical Cleaning - Removing of soil or dirt from a surface by manual scrubbing or use of abrasives as opposed to chemical cleaning. Also, use of machines for scrubbing or cleaning.

Method - A general or established way or order of performing a procedure. The means or manner by which a procedure is presented or taught. Also, the general term used to cover a worker's motion or procedure pattern.

Methodology - Body of methods and rules employed by a discipline. A particular procedure or set of procedures

Mild Cleaner - Cleaner which is mild or non-damaging in its action on the soiled surface, although it may have a pH of 9.8 or 10. A free alkali or .02 and a pH of 10.4 is still a relatively mild detergent, for example.

Mopping, Damp - Mopping with a mop wrung out in clear water or diluted detergent solution.

Mopping, Dry - See Dry Mopping.

Mopping, Wet - Use of cotton yarn or synthetic mops dipped into solution which is applied freely to surface. Spent solution and soil are picked up with wrung out mop and surface is rinsed with clear water.

Mop Treatment - Type of dust controllant used to treat yarn or cloth dusting tools. Also refers to the procedure used to treat mops for the purpose of dust and soil adherence.

Neutral - Neither acid or basic alkali. A neutral soap contains no free alkali or free fatty acids. A neutral pH is 7. In general terms, a neutral soapless detergent has no harsh alkalis though it may have a pH as high as 10 (see pH).

Neutral Cleaner - A solution with a pH of 6.5 to 7.5.

Neutral Detergent - Concentrated detergent with a pH range of 6.5 to 7.5.

Neutralize - To destroy the peculiar properties or effect of; for example, to neutralize an acid with a base.

Neutral Soap - Soap neither super fatted nor containing excess alkali. Its pH in water is about 9.5 to 10.0. The term "neutral" is used because an alcohol solution of soap has a pH of 7.0

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Normal Time - Time required by a qualified worker, working at an ordinary pace, when capably supervised, to complete an element, cycle or operation following a prescribed method. The time required by an average worker to perform a task, under average working conditions, at a normal pace. Allowances are not included. See Standard Time.

Obstructed - A condition resulting when 10-50% of the gross floor area is occupied by furniture or equipment

Odor Counteractant - An agent which neutralizes the intensity of odor by introducing specific chemical substances, or combinations, into the odorous environment without creating a new odor sensation or equal or higher intensity.

Output - The end result of a mental or physical procedure or process, or the amount of production from the application of work.

Penetration - The ability of a detergent to force its way between particles of soil and between the soil and the surface to which it adheres. This action depends upon surface tension and interfacial tension.

pH - A chemical scale for measuring the alkalinity of a solution. An indication of the strength rather than the amount of alkali or acid present. The portion of the scale commonly encountered is from 0 to 14. boiled distilled water, which is considered neutral, has a pH of 7.0 at room temperature; therefore, 7.0 is neutral on this scale. Acids have pH's lower than 7.0, while alkalis have pH's above 7.0. The lower the number, the greater the acidity; the higher the number, the greater the alkalinity. Following is a table showing the approximate pH value and relative acidity or alkalinity of various compounds in terms of pure water.

Material	Approximate pH Value	Relative Acidity or Alkalinity in Terms of Pure Water
Acid		
1% Muriatic Acid	0	10,000,000
1% Oxalic Acid	1	1,000,000
Vinegar	3	10,000
Soft Drinks	4	1,000
1% Boric Acid	5	100
Cow's Milk	6	10
Neutral		
Chemically Pure Water	7	1
Alkaline		
1% Sodium Bicarbonate	8	10
1% Borax	9	100
Neutral Liquid Soap	10	1,000
1% Trisodium Phosphate	12	100,000
½ % Caustic Soda	13	1,000,000
4% Caustic Soda	14	10,000,000

Pickup - Emptying waste containers and removing general debris from floor

Pitting - Small holes that form in hard surface flooring. Concrete and terrazzo when installed have fine pores, and use of high pH cleaners will cause the holes to become noticeable pits. Sealing such floors and using liquid, low pH detergents will eliminate pitting.

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Planning - Advance organizing of projects, projecting schedules, and coordinating operations.

Policing - Making an area clean and orderly; for example, picking up debris and litter from floors, furniture and grounds.

Policy - A guide for those in an organization who are expected to use discretionary judgment.

Porous - Full of tiny openings, usually visible only under a microscope. Porous material, such as concrete, is capable of being permeated by liquids or absorbing moisture.

Poultice - Mixture of a powder and liquid in a paste like form for application to a surface to remove soils and stains.

Powdering - Undesirable property of a floor finish that causes it to break up into dust or powder. Also the development of a fine white flaky deposit resulting from abrasion of the surface by buffing or heavy traffic.

ppm - Parts per million. Used as a measurement to determine the amount of any substance in proportion to the amount of water or other substance in which it is found. "Xppm" means X parts in a million parts.

ppm Hardness - Water hardness is expressed as parts per million (ppm) of calcium carbonate or in grains of calcium carbonate (CaCO₃).

Precipitation - Formation of solid particles in a solution, or the settling or rising up of small particles in a liquid medium

Precoating/Undercoating - Application of a seal to a freshly scrubbed surface, free of floor finish, applied to close the pores of the floor prior to applying the finishing coat.

Pretreated - Refers to cleaning cloths, dust mops or similar items that are treated by the manufacturer or supplier prior to delivery to the customer.

Preventive Maintenance - Performance of maintenance procedures and techniques to reduce or eliminate maintenance problems before they arise.

Procedure - Manner of proceeding or acting; also an act or a special course of action. In this manual, used to mean a specific job or task.

Project Cleaning - Cleaning tasks which require special course because of varying frequency; for example, repainting.

Radiator Brush - Single row of horsehair tufts attached to a flat wood handle, used for cleaning radiators, window sills, under furnishings and other hard-to-reach areas.

Recoatability - Application characteristics of a surface coating and its appearance after successive applications.

Refinishing - Removal of soil and reapplication of a floor finish.

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Removability - Ability of a polish to be removed from a test panel by a standard cleaning solution. If a finish is not completely removed, polish fails the removability test. "Passing" means the finish can easily be removed from a floor by the usual wax removal procedures with products which are not potentially harmful to the flooring.

Repairability - In floor maintenance, the property which allows a finish to be repaired by the feathering-in and adding of more finish to a damaged spot and use of buffing or other methods to bring repaired spot and surrounding areas to the same appearance.

Residual - Having long-lasting after-effects. For example, when a germicide or insecticide is used and the effects remain several days or longer, they are said to be residual.

Resilient, soft - Type of floor covering, i.e., vinyl tile, as opposed to hard surface flooring, i.e., cement or terrazzo. Resilient flooring is capable of withstanding shock without permanent deformation or rupture. Includes asphalt, linoleum, rubber, vinyl, cork, etc.

Restroom Fixtures - Term used to describe towel dispensers, mirrors, plumbing units, trash receptacles, and so forth, installed in restrooms.

Rinse - Act of applying then removing clean water from a surface in order to remove residual detergent and loosened soil.

Rug - Soft floor covering laid on the floor but not fastened to it. Usually a rug, unlike carpeting does not cover the entire floor surface.

Scheduling - Preparing written guides to the sequence and frequency of maintenance tasks.

Scrub - To clean thoroughly a surface without removing the finish or protective coating. To rub hard with a wet, rough brush.

Scuffing - Dull marks on a floor where the protective coating has been worn by traffic.

Seal - Substance that penetrates the floor material and fills pores rather than producing a surface finish.

Security - An element of the maintenance of the work environment, intended to protect property, prevent fire or theft, and to detect and report any malfunction.

Sediment - Fine soil particles in a liquid. With time, the larger of these will settle to the bottom of the container.

Setup Time - Time required to assemble and arrange tools, apparatus, and supplies required for the performance of assigned tasks.