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APPLYING A STONE POULTICE

STEP 1. IDENTIFYING THE STAIN

Knowing what type of stain you are trying to remove is half the battle in stain removal. Ask questions and investigate.

STEP 2. CLEAN THE STAINED AREA

Just because the stain looks like it is deep in the stone does not mean that it cannot be cleaned with stone cleaner. Clean the area thoroughly using a good stone cleaner with a neutral pH. A good, heavy-duty stone cleaner may also be used, but first try cleaning with a mild, neutral cleaner. When attempting to remove any stain on stone, always use the gentlest method first, and then proceed to more aggressive chemicals and techniques. Cleaning will also remove any surface residue caused by the staining material allowing for faster removal if a poultice is later needed.

STEP 3. REMOVE COATINGS

If the stone has been coated with wax, acrylics, urethane or any other topical treatments, it is important to strip the coating before attempting to remove the stain. Most coatings will interfere with the chemicals used to remove stains.

STEP 4. PRE-WET

Wet the area with distilled water to fill the pores of the stone with water. This isolates the stained area and allows the chemicals that will be used to stay in contact longer with the stain. Pre-wetting will also prevent the chemicals from drying out too fast.

STEP 5. PREPARE THE POULTICE

If a powdered poultice is to be used, mix the powder with the mineral spirits. Mix the powder and bleach into a thick paste (consistency of creamy peanut butter). You want the mixture to be wet but not so wet that it runs.

STEP 6. APPLY THE POULTICE

Carefully apply the poultice to the stained area, overlapping the poultice several inches over the stain. This overlapping is important since the stain may be spread further into the stone than it appears. The thicker the poultice is applied the longer it will take to dry. Generally, about 1/4" thick is sufficient for most stains.

STEP 7. COVER THE POULTICE

Cover the poultice with plastic and tape the edges down. Plastic food wrap works great. Be careful to use a tape that will not stain the stone. A low-contact masking tape works well.

Covering the poultice with plastic prevents it from drying out too quickly. It is necessary to keep the poultice wet as long as possible to allow the chemical to work on the stain and loosen it from the stone.

STEP 8. REMOVE THE PLASTIC COVER

After approximately 72 hours poke the poultice from outside of the plastic to see if it is completely dry. If the poultice is not yet completely dry, leave the poultice covered until it is dry-like talcum powder. This is extremely important. Remember, a poultice works by drawing the stain out of the stone from below the granite. The drying process is what causes this pulling action.

STEP 9. REMOVE THE POULTICE

After the poultice is thoroughly dry, scrape it off with a razor blade or putty knife. Be careful not to scratch the surface of the stone. Clean any residue of the poultice from the stone with water and a neutral cleaner.

STEP 10. EXAMINE THE STAINED AREA

Carefully examine the stained area. If the stain is not removed, re-apply a new poultice. It may take several poultices to remove difficult stains. If after two applications of poultice you do not see any lightening of the stain, then your choice of chemical may be incorrect or the stain may not be removable.