

"Tek" Newsletter

Newsletter

Repair of Buckles in Direct Glue-Down Installations

Occasionally, carpet that has been direct-glued can develop small bubbles in random areas shortly after completion of the installation. In many cases these bubbles are the result of improper transfer of the floor adhesive to the carpet's backing. This usually occurs when the correct adhesive open time was not observed and the adhesive dried before the carpet was introduced into the adhesive spread. Other common cause of bubbles is from inadequate spread or a "skip" off the floor adhesive and damage to the adhesive (mechanical grab) from trapped water or other floor contaminants.

If the installer is confident that a proper amount of adhesive was applied to the sub floor, applying steam from a hand-held apparel steamer to the problem area(s) can often repair bubbles in the carpet.

Vacuum the problem areas first to avoid causing any staining that might develop from steaming. Next, place a terry cloth over the carpet and then apply the steam, keeping the iron approximately 1/4" away from the carpet's face (make sure the water in the steamer is clean). This will relax the carpet and cause it to fall back down. The terry cloth will protect the carpet's face from excessive heat and metal stains that may drip off the steamer. By continuing to apply steam for 10-15 seconds afterwards, the floor adhesive will be reactivated and should grab the carpet's backing. Immediately after steaming, roll the problem area with a smooth seam tractor.

If the bubble reappears later, then either improper amounts of adhesive was used, or the adhesive was contaminated. In this event, you may have to slit the carpet in the gauge row and examine the

problem site to determine the exact cause of the glue-down failure. A lack of adhesive trowel lines on the floor and/or inadequate transfer of the adhesive to the carpet's backing indicates an installation problem, whereas amber colored adhesive will indicate the presence of oil, and white, chalky adhesive will indicate the presence of moisture (and alkali) from the sub floor.

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