

## **Protection and Maintenance of Natural Stone Floors**

Two important and separate steps need to be considered:

1. Initial protection using *penetrating or impregnating sealers*
2. Regular and periodic thorough cleaning using conditioners, polishers, impregnators or sealers, and mild pH, 7-9, cleaners specifically formulated for use on natural stone.

### **Regular Maintenance and Thorough Cleaning**

Once the floor is properly protected, daily or periodic maintenance becomes easier and the original stone appearance will remain for a longer period of time. Regular maintenance can be achieved by dust mopping, sweeping, or vacuuming when the stone becomes soiled. After all loose soil is removed, the stone may be further cleaned by using a pH neutral cleaner designed for stones. Water quality is important, as contaminants contained in the water, such as chlorine, salts, and minerals, may lead to degradation of the stone surface. It is critical to change the cleaning solution when dirty and minimal water is left standing on the floor.

### **Maintenance of Polished Stone Floors**

Special attention must be given to the polish and procedures. Polished finishes are typically used for residential applications. The regular use of special polish preservers and polishes, in addition to the daily pH neutral cleaner may not eliminate the need for periodic refinishing of the floor. Refinishing of stone floors is a task that should be undertaken only by those contractors who specialize in this field and who have the proper equipment and experience. Polished finishes are not recommended for high traffic areas due to the glossy finish being abraded by foot traffic. The resultant effect is normally a non-uniform gloss level.