

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **Q: What makes Aqua Shield HD™ unique?**
- **A:** ASHD™ is a penetrating sealer based on the latest fluoro-bond technology specifically engineered for all types of surfaces as well as most other natural and man-made surfaces. ASHD™ penetrates the pores of each structure rather than sit on the surface. Once cured it will not alter the appearance of your tile or paving. ASHD™ will protect your surfaces from water and oil-based stains by chemically reacting with the surface pores, creating a long lasting, breathable protective barrier that also results in regular cleaning becoming much easier.
- **Q: What is the difference between a penetrating sealer and a topical sealer?**
- **A:** Topical sealers produce a physical barrier over the surface, which also creates a darkening, yellowing or glossy effect. Surface (topical) sealers usually don't last long, they can make the floors slippery and need to be completely removed the next time sealing is required. Salts and efflorescence may also build-up under the non-breathable surface, causing the coating to appear cloudy.
- **Q: Why seal tiles and paving?**
- **A:** Building materials such as natural stone, brick, concrete, tiles, and grout are all made up of countless invisible capillary pores. This makes them porous and allows the absorption of damaging liquids such as water, water-borne salts, and oils. These liquids cause the building material to deteriorate prematurely and in doing so reduces their usefulness. Examples of deterioration include weathering, loss of strength, efflorescence, salt attack, sulphate attack, unsightly staining, biological attack, reinforcement rusting, chemical attack, swelling, embrittlement and picture framing. Sealing can help eliminate or significantly reduce most of these problems.
- **Q: Can Aqua Shield HD™ be used on polished and less adsorbent surfaces?**
- **A:** Yes. ASHD™ will not damage any stone, tile or grout surface and is specifically designed for highly polished surfaces as well as denser surfaces such as granite, marble, and bluestone. Due to the structure of dense or polished stone surfaces, ASHD™ is the best product for a whole range of paving.
- **Q: Is one coat of sealer enough for granite, marble, and bluestone?**
- **A:** Yes, that's another major advantage of ASHD, one flood coat is all that is required unlike many other sealers which require at least two.
- **Q: How do I know if my tiles or paving is sealed or not?**
- **A:** An easy way to find out if your tiles are sealed is to carry out the water test. Place a tablespoon of water on the treated surface for 20 minutes, remove the water with a tissue or cloth, pressing hard to soak up any water in the texture of the surface. If the water is absorbed or leaves a dark mark, the surface needs to be sealed, otherwise, the surface is adequately sealed and does not require further sealing.
- **Q: How often do I need to seal my paving?**
- **A:** If you sealed your tiles or stone with ASHD™ and have properly maintained your surfaces the sealer should last up to 15 years. The longevity can vary depending on the type of stone, tile or grout, the location and what type of wear the surface is exposed to.
- **Q: What can I do to keep my surfaces looking new after sealing?**
- **A:** To keep your tiles and grout looking new, it is recommended cleaning each week using a pH neutral cleaner to remove any dirt or grime. Strong detergents (strong acid or alkali) may affect the sealer, mild detergents and pH neutral substances are strongly recommended.

- **Q: Will Aqua Shield HD™ make my surfaces slippery?**
- **A:** ASHD™ does not change the slipperiness of the surface, and does not cause any darkening, yellowing or leave a visible shine. ASHD™ is also ideal around swimming pools and other wet areas.
- **Q: How do I compare penetrating sealers?**
- **A:** There are three main factors that set penetrating sealers apart. The carrier, the expected lifetime of the sealer and the depth of its penetration below the surface. A good depth of penetration will help provide longer lasting protection against traffic wear and weathering.
- **Q: Will Aqua Shield HD™ build up, crack, peel, or discolour?**
- **A:** No. ASHD™ will penetrate and bond to the pore structure of your surface. It is not a surface coating and will not crack, peel, yellow or discolour at any time.
- **Q: Should I seal marble and travertine?**
- **A:** Yes, these calcium-based stone types are very porous, leaving them susceptible to acidic stains. Many food products, such as lemon, wine, tomato sauce and coffee are acidic and will cause damage.
- **Q: What should I use to apply Aqua Shield HD™ sealers?**
- **A:** ASHD™ should be applied liberally, using a low-pressure sprayer, lambswool applicator, bristle broom or paintbrush or roller.
- **Q: Should the sealer be water-based or solvent-based?**
- **A:** Water and solvent are only carriers for the active ingredients of the sealer, once the sealer is applied the carrier will evaporate and only the active ingredients will remain. You should always avoid using solvents because of health and environmental risks. ASHD™ will penetrate highly polished and denser surfaces as well as honed and natural surfaces. Water-based sealers are easier to apply and have no toxic chemicals that can harm your health and environment.
- **Q: How do I maintain my surface after sealing?**
- **A:** We recommend regular cleaning of treated exterior surfaces with pH neutral products. The long-term good looks of a sealed surface will depend on regular maintenance. Removing spills immediately, removing marks and routine cleaning of the surface will maintain the look of your surfaces for longer.
- **Q: Which Aqua Shield HD™ products can I use in food prep areas?**
- **A:** All ASHD™ products are non-toxic and safe for use in food preparation areas.
- **Q: Is it normal to still get scuff marks on a surface that has been treated with an penetrating sealer?**
- **A:** Since penetrating sealers do not completely fill the surface pores, marks from the likes of rubber soled shoes can still discolour the surface. But this can be cleaned, which is the good news as the sealer holds the contaminating agent close to the surface.
- **Q: Is there a perfect sealer that always prevents stains?**
- **A:** No sealer can prevent all stains all the time. The sooner any spill can be cleaned up the less likely a stain will result. Acidic spills such as juice, soft drinks or wine can etch and dull polished stone if not wiped up promptly. Clean your tile and grout regularly so dirt and stains don't have a chance to build up.

- **Q: How can I get maintenance free tiles and paving?**
- **A:** In short, you can't. Surfaces sealed with penetrating sealers can still mark. To obtain maintenance a free surface you will need to use an epoxy or polyurethane surface coating or use a vitreous tile. However, surface coatings do have several significant problems as they do not breathe and can trap unsightly water vapour under the surface, they also need to be completely removed when re-coating, are very expensive to install and significantly change the look of the surface.
- **Q: Will I still get some staining after sealing?**
- **A:** We believe our sealers are the best of their type available on the market and are used daily by hundreds of professional applicators as well as thousands of DIY homeowners. However, even penetrating sealers have their limits. For instance, our sealers will not stop sensitive natural stone from etching, so to minimise absorption, spillages should be cleaned up immediately.
- **Q: Can I seal surfaces that have pre-existing sealer on them?**
- **A:** All pre-existing surface sealers must be removed before applying ASHD™ to any surface, as the coating left by the old surface sealer may block the product from penetrating the surface. You don't however need to strip pre-existing penetrating sealers, as ASHD™ will pass through any other previously applied penetrating sealer.
- **Q: Why are water-based sealers recommended over solvent sealers?**
- **A:** Solvent sealers are not recommended for health and safety reasons. They also require more skills when applying, and surfaces that contain any moisture could result in the surface turning white and become a costly fix.
- **Q: Will sealing my natural stone make it "salt safe"?**
- **A:** Not completely, a sealed stone will not become 'salt safe'. Rather, it becomes far more resistant to the ingress of salt. Our sealers are the best available and are quite easy to apply, however they must be applied correctly. With proper application our sealers can significantly improve the durability of natural stone in a saltwater environment.
- **Q: What is efflorescence and what causes it?**
- **A:** Efflorescence appears as a white deposit of mineral salts and is caused by moisture ingress. As the moisture enters and moves through the wall or floor, it dissolves mineral salts. This mineral salt solution eventually finds its way to the surface and as the water evaporates, it leaves behind a white deposit. On porous construction materials it may present a cosmetic problem only (primary efflorescence) but can sometimes indicate serious structural weakness (secondary efflorescence).  
To help stop efflorescence, surfaces should be sealed with a high-performance sealer as soon as practical. By using a deep penetrating, alkaline resistant sealer such as ASHD™, the surface will be able to withstand the highly alkaline environment found in cement-based materials. ASHD™ is completely breathable so moisture cannot be trapped below the surface.
- **Q: Will sealing make my floors dirt resistant?**
- **A:** Sealing a surface with a penetrating sealer will make the surface stain resistant, but not dirt resistant. The sealed surface should be cleaned as regularly as other non-sealed surfaces. If a problematic substance such as sticky tree gum falls on a sealed surface, it can still be difficult to clean, but should not permanently stain the surface, as it might an unsealed surface.
- **Q: How do I remove efflorescence and watermarks from acid sensitive surfaces?**
- **A:** There are products available specifically designed to remove efflorescence and fresh cement grout haze from most types of stone and tile surfaces, including acid sensitive surfaces. Watermarks appear as white residue once the water has dried consisting of calcium, fluoride, magnesium, and other minerals, which can also be removed using these products.

- **Q: Are your products environmentally friendly?**
- **A:** Yes. ASHD™ sealers are non-toxic water-based sealers and can be used indoors and outdoors, with no unpleasant odours or flammability issues.
- **Q: How do I know which sealer to buy for my surfaces?**
- **A:** The market offers many brands with similar claims. ASHD™ sealers differ in two important ways. Firstly, their deeper penetration provides extra protection against weathering, traffic wear, efflorescence, salt attack and freeze-thaw attack. Secondly, ASHD™ has a lifetime of up to 15 years.
- **Q: How many days after grouting with cement-based grout can I seal with Aqua Shield HD™?**
- **A:** It is recommended that grout needs to be allowed a minimum of 3 days to cure before sealing.
- **Q: Will sealing with Aqua Shield HD™ stop moss and mould growth?**
- **A:** Unfortunately, nothing can stop mother nature however ASHD™ sealers will result in the water beading, and running off the surface rather than soaking in. However, moss, mould and other biofilms can even grow on glass under the right environmental conditions. Moss can return as moisture and easily accumulate on top of your tiles or concrete. Sealing won't prevent moisture being deposited on the brick by fog/mist or dew, especially in relatively high humidity, therefore sealing will help a lot, but without the right care, growth can still occur. Sealing the surface with ASHD™ penetrating Sealer will significantly reduce the amount of water penetrating the surface and so greatly reduce the chances of moss & mould growth.
- **Q: Can I apply a topical coating to a surface already treated with Aqua Shield HD™ Penetrating Sealer?**
- **A:** Yes, but it must be a solvent based sealer otherwise you will have bonding issues
- **Q: Will Aqua Shield HD™ sealer change the appearance of my tiles, grout, and paving?**
- **A: No,** ASHD™ seals the pores within the tile or stone surface and will not change the feel, texture, or colour of the treated surface as ASHD™ dries invisible. ASHD™ sealers are also resistant to UV light.
- **Q: How long will Aqua Shield HD™ Sealer take to dry?**
- **A:** ASHD™ will be touch dry after 4 hours and requires 24 hours to fully cure.