

## CARING FOR AND CLEANING YOUR SPORTS FLOORING

A gym floor can be kept looking like new for many years by following a regular maintenance program. This should include a well thought out written program for the maintenance staff to follow. The recommendations and suggestions contained in this flyer should be thought through and modified to best meet the maintenance needs of your facility. Not all gyms are equal. Some are used only for basketball, but most are used for all types of after-hours activities in addition to gym classes. Because of this, some adjustments in the frequency of cleaning and even the cleaning methods should be well thought out, and then put into practice.

**General Maintenance** Keep the floor clean! A dirty floor wears fast and can be slippery. Keep it clean. The needed maintenance may change from time to time.

### **Limit Access to Floor**

Limit access to the floor as much as possible. Many gyms are used for much more than just athletic activities and this can be hard on a floor. Street shoes tend to track in dirt, salt, and stones and can leave severe black heel marks on any finish. Use walk-off mats daily. A dirty mat will wear the floor faster than no mat at all. In severe weather, the mats may need to be cleaned or changed more often, possibly two or more times a day.

### **Troubleshooting a Slick Floor**

1. Check for surface dust. Run your hand over the floor. If you pick up dust, dust mop the floor again, even if it has just been done. Make sure the dust mop is clean. Dusting with a dirty mop is a waste of time and will cause the floor to be slick.

2. Check for oily residue.

Run your hand over the floor. If you pick up heavy dirt or if it feels oily or slick, clean the floor with Squeaky Cleaner solution.

3. Look for outside sources of dirt and oil.

- Has an adjacent rug been recently cleaned or treated?
- Are the walk-off mats dirty?
- Are you in a dry-weather period where the humidity has dropped? This would create a lot of airborne dust. Dust mop more frequently during these periods.
- Are there any spaces under outside doors that may be allowing dust to blow in onto the floor?
- Have any wrestling mats been treated, cleaned, or dragged across the floor? Many times these mats are treated with oils that can make a floor very slick. If so, clean the floor with a cleaner that can remove the treatment.
- Is it rainy or muddy outside? Mud inside, when dry, will create excessive dust on a floor. Increase your frequency of cleaning.

4. For black heel marks, clean with a Squeaky Cleaner on a rag. If there is very severe marking, buff with a white pad.

**Take Special Care With Equipment Used In Gym** Do not drag things across the floor. Tables, chairs, volleyball stanchions, and exercise equipment can all cause a great deal of damage to the floor. Try to protect the floor from this unnecessary abuse. Coaches may not always cooperate for the best maintenance of the floor, but try to impress upon them as much as possible that dragging things across the floor will only make it harder for them to hold a successful gym class.

### **Dust Mop Daily**

Your floor will be safer and have better traction if kept dust-free. Dust mop more often in dry, dusty, or windy areas. High-use floors should be run at the beginning of class periods throughout the day. There should be specific dust mops assigned to this task. DO NOT use dust mops that are used for general cleaning of the rest of the building. This will help avoid the mistake of using oily, dirty mops on your gym floor. Use either a static charge type dust mop or a high-quality water-base dust mop treatment. Keep in mind that this type of mop will only pick up dust and not grit or stones. It will remove the slick dust from the floor so the floor will not be slippery. Be sure to CLEAN DUST MOPS DAILY. A dirty mop will only make the floor slicker. Launder the mops on a daily basis for the best dust pickup possible. This is more

important with the static mop than with any other.

### Maintenance Cleaning

Clean the gym regularly! Before games and once a week, use a maintenance cleaner on the floor; Basic Coatings Squeaky Cleaner is an excellent general maintenance cleaner for use on gym floors of all types. It removes body oils, dirt, cosmetics, hair, and dust mop treatments from the floor. Squeaky Cleaner dries quickly and can be used on a gym just an hour ahead of a game. Under fast drying conditions, it can be used within 30 minutes of a game. Use 1 quart of Squeaky Cleaner to 1 gallon of water. Soak several large bath towels in the solution. Wring them out until they are damp. Tack the floor with the towel wrapped around a push broom. **DO NOT RINSE THE TOWEL BACK IN THE SOLUTION.** This builds up dirt and oils in the cleaning solution and the next towel will redeposit the dirt. Use several towels, all with fresh, clean solution. **NEVER** put a dirty towel back in your bucket. Use as many towels as needed. You may also use this procedure during halftime or whenever a floor seems slick.

### Maintenance Recoating

Maintenance recoating should be done on an annual basis on most gyms. Your gym should be recoated when the original film is showing signs of wear, but before the finish has worn down to the bare wood or stripes. Bare wood will be resanded. A wood floor professional should be consulted when recoat questions arise.

### IMPORTANT

- **NEVER** shut down the ventilating system in your facility for a prolonged period of time.
- **NEVER** clean your floor using scrubbing machinery or power scrubbers that use water under pressure. Water is your floor's worst enemy!
- **NEVER** use household cleaning products or procedures. They can be harmful to the floor finish and to the wood and may also leave floors sticky or slippery, and potentially harmful to athletes.
- **NEVER** attempt to modify or repair your sports floor without first consulting with your flooring contractor. Do not block or obstruct expansion spaces around the floors perimeter or adjacent to columns and inserts. Make adequate expansion provisions in flooring and subfloor before lagging fixtures, equipment, or bleachers through the floor system into the concrete. You have invested in a quality, high-performance gym floor finish – a finish that not only provides exceptional durability, but also a professional look for your gymnasium floor. Protect your investment by following the maintenance procedures outlined in this guide and your floor will give you a first-rate playing surface for many years to come.