



Surface Repairs Prior to Polishing Concrete

CPC Position Statement #6

Owners request polished concrete floors for their affordability, durability, ease of maintenance, and ability to fit aesthetically into commercial, retail, institutional, and other spaces. An important consideration in the overall aesthetics is surface repairs completed prior to polishing. The materials and techniques used to patch surfaces determine how well they blend into the final polished appearance.

Most floors to be polished require surface repairs due to concrete placement and finishing, but also because of damage from the continued use of the surface for construction operations. Spalls, scratches, pinholes, and cracks may need repair. Slabs for tilt-up buildings, for example, incur damage from anchors inserted into the slab for forming and bracing the panels. The concrete or general contractor often performs surface repairs, or, in some cases, they are assigned to an independent third party. It is the position of the Concrete Polishing Council (CPC) that the polishing contractor performs these repairs to minimize the effect on the final polished slab appearance.

Concrete and general contractors know how to repair concrete, but not necessarily how to produce a repair that will not detract from the final polished appearance. Polishing contractors use repair materials that can be polished and match the surface colors, and they use techniques to minimize the aesthetic impacts of repairs (see Fig. 1). Important repair issues are plumbing cutouts and column blockouts (see Fig. 2 and 3).

If the concrete contractor must make repairs, consider leaving the repairs about 1/2 in. (13 mm) below the final surface elevation. The polishing contractor can then build up the repair to the final surface elevation using a repair product that can be polished.

It's not possible to estimate the amount of surface repairs needed, and resulting costs, until the polishing contractor performs a condition survey. Thus, the bid will not have included any cost or schedule provisions for surface repairs. CPC recommends that the owner sets aside a time and materials allowance to cover needed surface repairs. If no surface repairs are needed, or repairs cost less than the allowance, the owner retains the excess funds.

Contact your CPC polishing contractor for estimates on typical surface repair allowances for your work.

CPC polishing contractors will cooperate with general contractors, construction managers, and concrete contractors to complete surface repairs. CPC polishing contractors will perform surface repairs prior to polishing to provide the owner with the desired final polished appearance. Contact your CPC polishing contractor or the CPC Technical Hotline with questions at (888) 483-5288 or at cpchotline@asconline.org.



Fig. 1: A properly repaired crack will be difficult to see after the floor is polished



Fig. 2: Plumbing cutout after repair



Fig. 3: Column blockout after repair

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