

# EXTREME WEATHER GROUTING

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Ideally, grout should be installed when the temperature is between 50°F and 100°F, after the bonding mortar has properly cured. While this can be controlled in many interior installations with modern HVAC systems, that is not the case in exterior projects or those without temperature controls.

Follow these tips for grouting when environmental conditions are extreme.

## WHEN THE WEATHER IS EXTREMELY HOT

- Polymer-modified cementitious grouts, such as Polyblend® or Prism®, are formulated to retain moisture and promote proper curing over a wide variety of conditions.
- Keep it cool. Store the bags of grout inside or under shade until they are to be used. Use cool water to mix grout powder. Keep ice on hand to cool down the water if necessary.
- Do not mix the grout with excessive amounts of water or remix with additional water. This will affect the color and cause soft and powdery grout.
- Avoid mid-day grouting in extreme heat. Grout in the early morning or late afternoon when temperatures are cooler. Shade the tile project if possible.
- Dampen the tile with clean, cool water prior to grouting. This helps to cool down the tile and prevents porous tile from drawing the moisture out of the grout too rapidly.
- Cover or damp cure the grout. Cover the installation with 30 lb, non-staining Kraft paper for 72 hours immediately after installation. If left exposed, periodically mist the grout lightly with clean, cool water.

## WHEN THE WEATHER IS COLD

- Standard cement grouts will take longer to cure in cold weather. Use a fast-setting, high-performance grout, such as Prism, in cold weather.
- Store bags of grout in a warm room and be sure to use room temperature water (70-80°F). An immersion heating coil can be used to warm the water. Never use hot water when mixing cement-based based grout.

- If too much water is used during mixing or cleaning the grout off the tiles, a white layer referred to as efflorescence can form on the surface of the grout. The cold weather slows the cure and allows salts to come to the surface of the grout. Generally, this can be removed with an acid cleaner or mild abrasive cleaner *such as* AquaMix® NanoScrub®.
- Epoxy grouts, like CEG-Lite™ 100% Solids Epoxy Grout, generate heat as they cure and will cure in cold weather, although more slowly. They become stiff and are much more difficult to spread when they are cold. Workable consistency can be achieved by warming the components to 70-75°F before mixing in warm - not hot - water.

## WHEN THE WIND IS BLOWING

- Erect a shield against the wind. Wind can dry out the surface of the grout. This will weaken the grout and leave it a darker shade so it may not match the selected color.
- Lightly mist the grout with cool, clean water to keep it damp. This will help it cure and build strength. If the surface thoroughly dries, rewetting will not help.

## WHEN THE RELATIVE HUMIDITY IS VERY LOW

- Dampen the tile with clean, cool water prior to grouting. This prevents porous tile and the dry air from drawing the moisture out of the grout too rapidly.
- Cover the installation with 30 lb. non-staining Kraft paper for 72 hours immediately after installation. If left exposed, periodically mist the grout lightly with clean, cool water.
- Do not add additional water to the grout mix. This will weaken the grout and potentially cause efflorescence.
- Grout small areas that can be cleaned quickly. Leaving excess grout on the face of the tile can make it difficult to clean off when it dries quickly on the face of the tile.

