Dribond
CONSTRUCTION CHEMICALS

Tiling in Cold Weather

Tiling in cold weather can present some challenges, but with proper planning and precautions, it is still possible to carry out tiling projects successfully. Here are some considerations to keep in mind when tiling in cold weather:

1. **Temperature and Humidity**: Pay close attention to the temperature and humidity levels in the area where you'll be tiling. Cold temperatures, particularly below 10°C will affect the curing time of waterproofing membranes, adhesives and grout. At temperatures below 5°C, the chemical reaction required for cement-based products can be halted altogether.
2. **Waterproofing Membrane Selection**: Choose membranes such as **Dribond Construction Chemicals** **Hydrathane** or **Liquid Flash 1** or **Liquid Flash Undertile**. Remember, water-based membranes cure by the evaporation of water and decreased rates of drying are common in winter due to slower water loss. They can also become thicker in cold conditions. Ensure membranes have been allowed sufficient curing times before applying adhesives.
3. **Adhesive Selection**: Choose adhesives such as **Dribond Construction Chemicals** **Fastflex** or **Rapidfix** that are specifically designed for faster set times. Still keep in mind, that our technical datasheets quote information based on 23°C and 50% relative humidity, and therefore working in cold temperatures will extend the working, setting and grouting times.
4. **Surface Preparation**: Ensure that the surface you're tiling is clean, dry and free from any contaminants. In cold weather, moisture can freeze on surfaces, causing adhesion issues. Use a moisture meter to check the substrate's moisture content before tiling.
5. **Warm Up Materials**: Store your tile, adhesive and waterproofing membranes in a temperature-controlled environment before using them. Cold materials can be more difficult to work with and may not adhere properly. Consider using a heated storage area before installation.
6. **Heating the Area**: If possible, heat the room or area where you're working before and during the tiling process. This will help maintain a suitable temperature for proper adhesion and curing. Temporary heating solutions like space heaters can be used, but ensure proper ventilation and safety precautions.
7. **Extended Curing Time**: Cold temperatures can slow down the curing process of adhesives and grout. Be prepared for longer curing times and allow sufficient time for the materials to set and dry properly before subjecting them to any stress or moisture.
8. **Protect the Installation**: Once the tiling is complete, it's crucial to protect the installation from freezing temperatures until the adhesives and grout have fully cured. Avoid exposing the newly installed tiles to freezing conditions or moisture for the recommended curing period.
9. **Efflorescence in Grout**: The accumulation of water-soluble salts from cementitious materials can be more pronounced in cement-based grouts during winter due to prolonged water residence times caused by slower evaporation. When water interacts with the cement components, it draws out these salts, which later deposit on the surface as the water evaporates. It's important to note that prematurely sealing the grout can worsen the **efflorescence** issue.

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