

National Tile Contractors Association

October 2010

# TileLetter

www.tileletter.com

**ON THE COVER:**  
**LATICRETE International Inc.**



**Tile vs. stone installations**

**Coming in 2011:  
The TCNA Handbook for  
Ceramic Tile, Stone and  
Glass Tile Installation**

**Top contractors: taking a  
peek at some of NTCA's best**

## Protect natural stone during hurricane season

International Stoneworks, a leading Houston's natural stone restoration and maintenance business, offers advice to protect natural stone from ravages of hurricanes like Ike and Rita.

Since most natural stones are porous, heavy rain and wind can cause water and moisture to penetrate the stone from not only the surface but also from the sides through the grout, and below from the substrate.

To protect the stone from the surface and sides, International Stoneworks recommends that the surface of the stone and grout be properly sealed with a water-repellent penetrating sealer such as its Seal & Go® S. Some sealers last longer than others but a light sealing every two years is recommended.

To protect the stone surface and grout, cover it with two layers of contractor's paper or felt paper. Avoid plastic since it inhibits moisture evaporation. Using Blue® painter's tape to hold the paper to the stone will eliminate sticky residue when removed. Then waterproof it with a layer of duct tape.

Protecting the substrate is more difficult and may not totally prevent moisture from migrating inside and penetrating the stone. Make sure that windows, doors, etc. around the stone (inside and outside) are properly caulked.

As soon as possible following the storm, remove the paper, damp mop the floor with a neutral cleaner such as Lavenet Green and let the surface dry. Use fans and dehumidifiers if necessary. Surface moisture

is a contractor's perspective."

After the Memphis meeting the committee met in San Antonio, D.C., Phoenix, and Austin, and in June signed off on everything, Woodliff said.

The new *Handbook* version is a one-stop shop for ceramic/porcelain and stone tile setting methods. "The entire advantage is simply consolidation," Muehlbauer said. "At this point, to obtain information on installing stone tile, one must use a combination of the *TCA Handbook*, *NITCA Reference Manual*, *MIA Design Manual*, and the *ANSI* book. The goal of this project is to consolidate what is now a multi-reference book research project into a single, standalone document. This will not only make it easier for the designers and tradespeople to do their respective jobs, but also increase the likelihood that they do them correctly."

When the *Handbook* is released at Coverings in Las Vegas next March, it will approach 300 pages and contain about 75 percent of the tile installation methods translated into stone details as well, said Samolki - especially all the wall methods. These are tried-and-true stone installation methods, Woodliff explained. Muehlbauer also created a "Natural Stone Tile Selection and Installation" introductory section that is an at-a-glance guide to such topics as types of stones, how to select stones for a given application, water sensitivity, fiberglass mesh-reinforced stone, staining, sanded grout, filled voids in travertine, pitting in marble, joint widths and many, many more.

"I want to thank and commend



sometimes evaporates in time and the stone does not need restoration or replacement. If there is some discoloration and it does not disappear, an on-site evaluation by a stone restoration and maintenance company may be needed.

"A large part of stone care is learning how to maintain your natural stone," said Rawi Tabbah, International Stoneworks president. "Taking precautions to protect your stone floors and surfaces during the hurricane season can end up saving you a lot of money. Even though Hurricane Ike was in 2008, I recently went to a home that still had extensive damage done to its marble floors. Hopefully these simple steps will help homeowners take a proactive role in preserving their home during the coming months," said Tabbah.

For more information on products and services offered by International Stoneworks, visit [www.intlstoneworks.com](http://www.intlstoneworks.com) or phone (713) 956-8291.



*To protect the stone surface and grout, cover it with two layers of contractor's paper or felt paper. Using Blue® painter's tape to hold the paper to the stone will eliminate sticky residue when removed. Then waterproof it with a layer of duct tape.*

Stephanie Samolki, Eric Arrachan and the TCNA staff for running with the idea and forming the committee, then facilitating the effort," said Bart Berriga, NITCA executive director. "We wouldn't have been able to have done this project without their involvement, along with Chuck's expertise in converting the tile details to stone."

Woffel is proud of the fact that NITCA drove this idea but also of the collaboration that brought an idea to fruition. "TCNA has done a hell of a job," Woffel said. "I am SO proud to work with all these people. It was collaborative and rewarding. And different associations can work together when they have a goal that is worthwhile. NITCA is the most important contractor association in the world and this proves it!"

*A small portion of what the new stone details will look like in the 2011 TCNA Handbook for Granite Tile, Stone and Glass Tile installation.*