

# COVE BASE

## *Decorative Color Chip Flooring Systems*



### **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS: COVE BASE (DECORATIVE COLOR CHIP)**

#### **GENERAL**

For seamless flooring applications where maximum sanitation is required, or where floors will be cleaned with large amounts of water, installation of an integral cove base is essential. The cove base ties the floor to the wall without a seam and facilitates cleaning. The base can be installed to any height. In areas where the walls receive abuse, such as lavatories or elevator cabs, the cove base is carried to wainscot height. The most common height of the cove base is 4-6 inches. The cove is the most visible part of the installation and the ability to install a “clean” base with attention to detail often separates one installation company from another.

#### **SURFACE PREPARATION**

The cove base is always installed after surface preparation of the horizontal floor area and prior to installation of the horizontal flooring system. The vertical surface must be clean. If installing cove over FRP panel, stainless steel or a previously coated surface, it is very important to abrade the surface well prior to installation. Use sandpaper or a grinding wheel to accomplish this.

In some renovation installations, particularly in commercial kitchens, portions of the wall may have deteriorated and become unsound. If these areas are minor, they should be repaired using fiberglass tape and Epoxy 300 Flex Paste. In some cases, portions of the wall may need to be replaced to ensure a sound substrate for the cove base.

#### **INSTALLATION OF THE TERMINATING STRIP**

All cove base installation should be done using a terminating cap strip at the top of the base. This material should have an “L” configuration, be plastic or metal and generally leave a cove that is 1/8 inch to 3/16 inch in thickness. A chalk line should be snapped at the predetermined height of the base and the cap strip attached either with construction adhesive, a hot glue gun with construction grade glue, or sheet metal screws. If using screws, be sure to use flat screws that do not protrude beyond the thickness of the cap strip.

#### **MIXING AND APPLICATION OF THE EPOXY 400 BASE MATERIAL**

Epoxy 400 should be used as the resin binder for the cove base system. A good formula for the cove mixture is 4-5 parts aggregate to 1 part mixed resin - 1/3 part fumed silica. The fumed silica aids greatly in helping the mixture “hang” on the vertical surface.

Convenient mixing can be done in a 5-gallon pail using a 1/2 inch electric drill with a paddle type mixing attachment. Then mix 2 quarts of Epoxy 400 Part A with 1 quart of Epoxy 400 Part B. Add 1 quart of fumed silica and mix. Add 50 lbs (equal to 4 gallons) of aggregate. Blend thoroughly to completely homogenize the mixture. If you have difficulty getting this mixture to hang on the wall without sagging, additional aggregate can be added to obtain a “drier” mixture.

Just prior to application of the cove blend, prime the surface with a mixture of Epoxy 400 and fumed silica. The mixing ratio of Epoxy 400 and fumed silica should be as follows: 1.5 quarts of Epoxy 400 to 1 quart of fumed silica. Bring the primer down to coat at least 1-1/2 inches onto the horizontal floor. Priming ensures a better bond and helps the resin/aggregate material hang better. If the primer should advance past the tacky stage, re-prime the area.

The resin/aggregate blend should be applied to the vertical surface using a narrow flat trowel or broad knife. Leave enough material at the juncture of the floor and wall to form the radius and pull the remaining material up to the metal cap strip. This initial placement of the material is very important. If too much material is left, the excess must be pushed away during finishing. If too little is initially deposited, hollows or cavities will be left that will require the application of more material during finishing.

### **MIXING AND APPLICATION (CONT.)**

After the material has been placed, it should be finished with a 6 inch inside step cement tool. Radius on the trowel should be 3/4 or 1 inch. Smooth the material by angling the trowel slightly and using pressure when pulling the trowel up. Use the lip of the cap strip as a thickness guide. The right-handed mechanic should move from right to left as he is facing the wall. Trowel lubrication is important in attaining a smooth, "closed" surface. Iso-propyl alcohol makes a good low toxicity lubricant. The trowel may either be sprayed or dipped into the lubricant. A paint tray with a saturated piece of carpet works well. It is important to feather the cove material into the horizontal floor substrate. This avoids a ridge that would need to be sanded before tying the floor into the cove.

Finishing the cove is a skill learned by close attention to cause and effect. The objective is a smooth, uniform surface free from unsightly, soil collecting irregularities. This is accomplished by understanding what type of finishing technique produces the desired result and looking back over your work to evaluate the result. Material that accumulates on the top of the cap strip should be scraped away as you proceed.

Special attention must be paid to the inside and outside corners. A smaller radius tool or spoon is helpful on the inside corners. Outside corners must be individually formed and carefully shaped.

### **APPLICATION OF DECORATIVE VINYL ACRYLIC COLOR CHIPS**

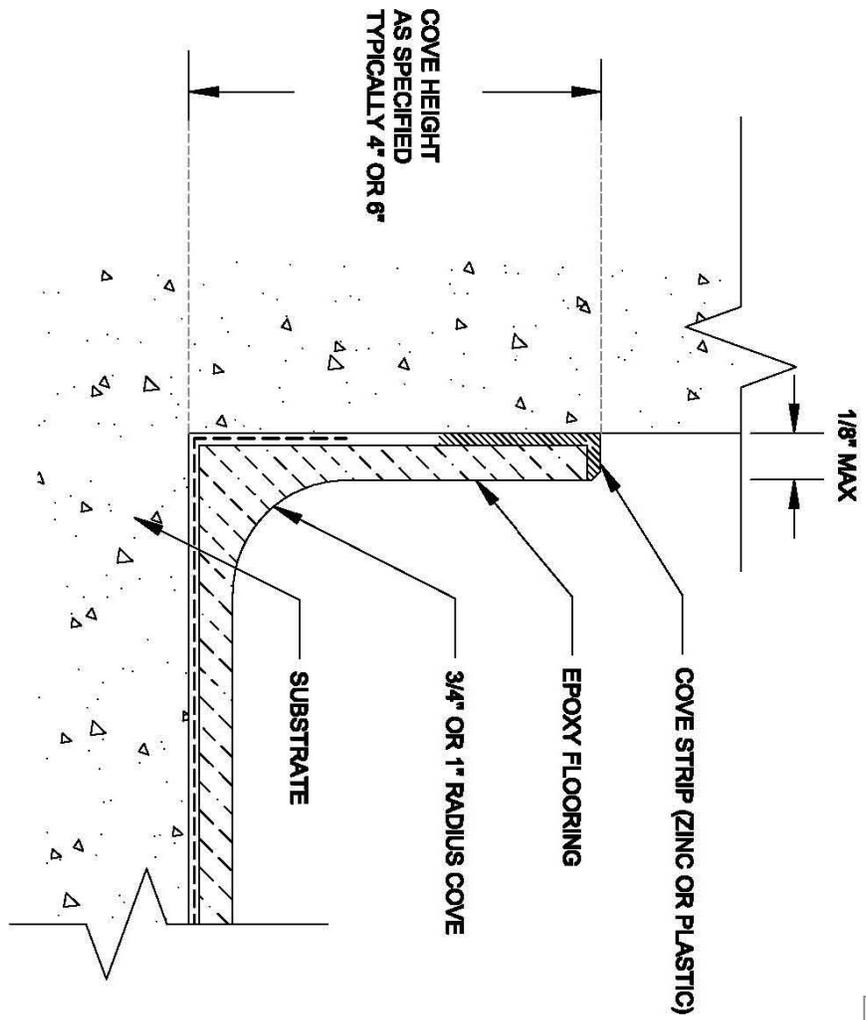
After the cove has cured and before application of the horizontal floor, scrape or sand any rough areas that may have been left. Using a thickened pigmented coating (2 quarts A to 1 quart B plus 1 quart fumed silica), apply with a brush or roller to the aggregate troweled cove. Make sure that the cove is completely covered and smooth.

Apply chip using 4 inch wide putty knife or a steel trowel, bringing the chip up from the bottom, to the top, paying attention to complete coverage. Chip may also be broadcast into the wet grout coat, again paying attention to complete coverage. Once product is dry, lightly sand or scrape to remove sharp edges before application of seal coats.

### **APPLICATION OF THE SEAL COATS**

Seal coats can be applied during the top coat application of the horizontal flooring. Apply to cove using a brush or a roller. Two seal coats are recommended. Allow the first coat to tack up slightly before applying the second coat. Applying thin and even coats avoids puddling of the material at the bottom of the base.

The crevice between the cap strip and wall must be sealed with a urethane caulking material after completion of the cove.



## COVE BASE WITH CAP

SCALE: N.T.S.