

CERACLAD® Technical Bulletin

Bulletin No: TB-2406-01

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Subject: Best Practices for Keeping CERACLAD® Panels Clean and Dust-Free During Cutting

Purpose

To ensure the aesthetic quality and long-term performance of CERACLAD® fiber cement panels, it is critical to maintain panel cleanliness and prevent dust accumulation during the cutting process. This bulletin outlines recommended practices to minimize surface contamination and explains the consequences of improper handling.

Background

CERACLAD® panels feature a factory-applied, baked-on ceramic coating engineered for durability, stain resistance, and weatherability. However, the cutting process—especially when performed without adequate dust collection—can deposit fine cementitious dust particles on the finished surface.

If not promptly removed, these particles may:

- Bond to the surface and cause staining during moisture exposure
- Scratch or abrade the ceramic coating during handling or cleaning
- Diminish final appearance, especially on darker finishes or smooth-textured panels

Recommended Procedures

1. Cutting Environment

- Perform cutting in a designated area, away from installed or stored panels
- Use tables or platforms with integrated dust capture systems

2. Cutting Tools

- Use a power saw with a diamond-tipped fiber cement blade
- Always use a vacuum-equipped saw or local exhaust system (e.g., HEPA-rated dust extractor) to minimize airborne particles

3. Panel Orientation

- When possible, cut panels with the finished side facing down on a rigid foam base, or similar, to protect the finished surface
- If panels must be cut face-up, use a clean, padded surface and ensure the cutting table is free of debris

4. Cleaning During and After Cutting

Immediately after cutting, use one or more of the following cleaning methods **prior** to installation:

- **Soft microfiber cloth** to wipe the finished surface
- **Clean, dry compressed air** to blow off dust and loose particles
- **Soft-bristle brush (non-abrasive)** to gently dislodge dust from textured surfaces or edges
- **For stubborn residue**, lightly mist with clean water or a non-ammoniated glass cleaner, then wipe dry with a clean cloth

Important: Avoid abrasive brushes, pads, solvents, or harsh cleaners, which may damage the coating.

5. Storage and Staging

- Avoid stacking cut panels face-to-face without a protective separator
- Store cut panels under cover and off the ground to reduce recontamination from wind-blown dust

Consequences of Non-Compliance

Failure to maintain surface cleanliness during cutting may result in:

- Permanent staining or discoloration, especially when exposed to moisture
- Increased post-installation cleaning costs and customer dissatisfaction

Proper cutting and cleaning practices are essential to preserving the appearance and performance of CERACLAD® panels. By following the guidelines in this bulletin, installers can minimize the risk of surface damage and ensure a clean, professional finish.

For additional support, installation videos, or replacement instructions, contact CERACLAD Technical Services at technical@ceraclad.com.

Ceraclad Clean Panel Checklist

☒ Cutting Area Setup

Cutting area is set up away from installed or stored panels

Work surface is clean, level, and debris-free

Dust control (vacuum/extractor or containment) is in place

☒ Cutting Tools

Diamond-tipped fiber cement blade used

Power saw is HEPA vacuum-equipped or used with local exhaust

Saw inspected and operating safely

☒ Panel Orientation & Protection

Finished side placed face-down when possible

If cutting face-up, surface is padded or protected

Panels handled with clean gloves to avoid smudges

☒ Cleaning After Cutting

Soft microfiber cloth

Clean compressed air (avoid oil-contaminated air)

Soft-bristle brush (non-abrasive)

Light misting with clean water or glass cleaner and drying

Confirm no abrasive cleaners or tools used

☒ **Storage & Staging**

Cut panels separated with non-abrasive material

Panels stored under cover, off ground

No stacking of finished faces against each other

☒ **Final Check**

All cut panels inspected for dust, residue, or surface marks

Problem areas cleaned before installation on the wall

Team reminded of importance of keeping surfaces clean and dry