

# SMART WORDS for SMART HOMEOWNERS

Welcome to the experience of experts and their advice on relevant homeowner topics.

A Quarterly Information eLetter

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### 🔍 **Eliminating Bathroom Mold Problems**

Aside from privacy, water is the main focus of a contemporary bathroom. Why is it then, that water is the in the forefront of damage. We don't like non sequiturs in life and have negotiated with this practical dilemma for centuries.

Over time water damage, mold or mildew will arrive in your home. This may not become conspicuous until you take the time to inspect or begin a renovation. Removing old fixtures, floor tiles and old showers is the first way.

#### **Why do these problems occur?**

The shifting and settling of the fixtures and infrastructure, allow minute cracks to appear and the otherwise water tight integrity to disappear. In some cases grout failure is being caused by aggressive, even caustic, ingredients of modern "tile and tub cleaners".

But even without the use of tile cleaners, grout will age and develop minute cracks and separations. Cracks invite water penetration into the subsurface and beyond. By the time you notice these cracks, moisture penetration, staining or worse has already occurred.

#### **Over The Long Term?**

The longevity of the structure can be threatened by constant dampness. Water and moisture entry, when left unchecked, will damage walls, floor joists and sub flooring. Moisture and condensation will weaken and compromise any wood it meets. The interior walls will be damaged, sheet rock will be damaged, studs behind walls will be damaged. Dampness will support mold or mildew and/ or begin to rot unseen wood. These are unhealthy conditions for humans and pets. These conditions threaten the durability of the home. The

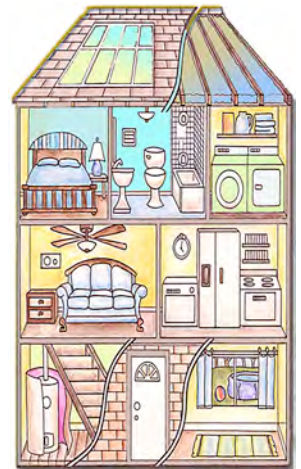


detrimental effects will reduce a home's market value.

#### **Don't ignore loose caulk!**

In a nutshell, caulk is used in a bathroom, tub or shower enclosure to keep water from creeping up, under or around the tiles at joints between tile and the tub or shower pan, or on joints where walls meet. It is also used on wood trim to keep drafts out and provide a finished seamless appearance prior to painting.

Leaky caulk is not to be ignored! I have seen tiled bathrooms where the two or three bottom rows of tiles were loosened by water which crept through tile joints. The repair can be time-consuming and expensive. And you might not be able to use the enclosure again for a week or more while things "dry out"!



#### **About Good Caulk**

We use a caulk named Phenoseal® for most jobs because it is true to its reputation for outstanding adhesion, great sealing and "paintability".

Phenoseal® is a Vinyl Adhesive Caulk. It is used for bonding, caulking, and sealing. It sticks to most common building materials: tile to metal, fiberglass to wood, concrete to stone, metal to glass, wood to foam insulation, etc. It also sticks to itself, while a silicone alone does not.

As a bonding agent, Phenoseal® makes a joint that is usually stronger than the original material. We use it when hanging crown molding also because it works as an adhesive and also fills in the imperfections of matting walls to wood surfaces.

As a caulk, Phenoseal® contracts and expands to seal joints of 1/4 inch or less. Because it will stand some movement it is ideal for moist environments.

As a sealant, Phenoseal® keeps water and air from penetrating cracks and seams, helping to prevent energy loss.

Because it is water based, Phenoseal® is easy to use and easy to clean up! It cures by the evaporation of its water

content. Once cured, it is at its maximum strength.

This cured caulk resists mildew, oils, paint thinner, gasoline, asphalt, antifreeze, soap, rust, corrosion, salt water, even mild acids and alkalis. It can be covered with oil or water based paints and coatings.

### **When the Damage Is Done**

You can't "turn a blind eye" to a problem that starts out of your view. You need to be aware and attentive.

If the damage is done and extensive call a contractor or a bathroom remodeler. Get an estimate from at least three sources. Remodeling a bathroom is inconvenient. Why not protect your investment now.

### **Reminders For Best Caulking Results:**

- ✓ Always caulk in temperatures above 45°F.
- ✓ Don't apply it to wet or damp surfaces. Surface must be dry and clean before application.
- ✓ Do not apply when rain or freezing temperatures is forecasted before full cure can occur.
- ✓ Don't use it for marine or automotive applications or below the waterline.
- ✓ Don't use it for filling butt joints, surface defects or for tuck-pointing. Not for use between two non-porous surfaces or with mirrors.
- ✓ Joint size should not exceed 1/4" wide x 1/4" deep. If joint depth exceeds 1/4", use backer rod material.
- ✓ Store all caulk away from extreme heat or cold.
- ✓ Tooling Time is less than 7 minutes.
- ✓ Tack-free Time is ≈ 30 - 45 minutes in most cases.
- ✓ Dynamic Joint Movement: ± 25%.
- ✓ Paintable: Yes in ≈ 2 - 4 hours.
- ✓ Vehicle is an Advanced Acrylic Polymer.
- ✓ Lifetime Guarantee and easy water clean-up.

### **Application**

1. Surface must be clean, dry and free of dust and old caulk.
2. Cut nozzle at 45° angle to desired bead size.
3. If using the 10 oz. cartridge, load it into a caulking gun.

4. Apply caulk to surface, pushing a bead of caulk ahead of nozzle. Move caulk into the crack.
5. For a neat finish, smooth the bead of caulk with a wet finger. Keep finger moist.
6. Clean up excess caulk with a damp sponge before it skins over (≈ 7 minutes).
7. Caulk will cure in ≈ 12 to 48 hours, depending on joint depth, temperature and humidity.
8. Allow caulk to dry at least 2 hours (longer in cool or humid conditions) before painting with latex or oil-based paints.

### **The Counties We Cover**

If you're in Northwestern New Jersey please eMail or call us for more details about our services. Or you can go to our web site to see more.

### **Contact Us**

- \* Web - <http://www.handyman-central.net>
- \* eMail - [ron@handyman-central.net](mailto:ron@handyman-central.net)
- \* Phone/Fax - 973-627-7398

### **Super Service Award from Angie's List**

We have been awarded a prestigious AWARD and a COMPLEMENT by our customers.

A Super Service Award from Angie's List users in categories of Handyman and Painting-Interior has been awarded to Handyman Central Services, Inc.®

This award is given out annually. It goes exclusively to Service Providers that have achieved and/or maintained a SUPERIOR service rating on Angie's List.

Less than 5% ever meet the eligibility requirements, which are to have an 'A' overall, a minimum number of customer reports in a calendar year and to have NEVER been in the Penalty box.



### **Shrink Your Overgrown To-Do List**

Call me for suggestions on other minor and major tasks in and around your home and office.

- ✓ We are insured.
- ✓ We are not a franchise or home service conglomerate.
- ✓ We do NOT send hired "sub-contractors" to do your work.
- ✓ We will shrink your Overgrown To-Do List.
- ✓ Take a look at some of the jobs we can do for you at our web site.

Ron

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