



CARPET CARE

Time lapsed is not a significant factor in ridding carpet stains.

Stain-Proofing Seals the Deal

Apartment owners and managers take note: Approximately 58 percent of the carpet manufactured in the United States is nylon, which is more durable than polyester. However, it's not as stain resistant. Consequently, carpet manufacturers are scrambling to develop new stain-proofing treatments, technologies and fibers.

Mohawk Industries' SmartStrand carpet uses a material known as Triexta, a plant-based polymer that has built-in stain protection. Developed by DuPont and exclusively marketed by Mohawk, the fiber is approaching \$1 billion in sales.

SmartStrand has proven to be effective in fighting blueberry and soil stains when treated with water and a mild detergent, however, mustard and wine stains tend to linger in sample tests.

The Wall Street Journal (WSJ) recently conducted a test to put these stain-resistant innovations to the test.

Mohawk says that mild detergent or water will clean up most common household spills, including red wine, on to SmartStrand silk. WSJ concluded that two of its spills onto SmartStrand—a half bottle of red wine and mustard—lingered on carpet after cleaning.

These two stains can be removed from SmartStrand without the need for harsh chemicals; however, there are some specific cleaning techniques that should be used in these cases. For example, the time and effort required to clean the spill is in direct proportion to the quantity of liquid spilled on the carpet, says Mohawk Manager Sarah Tuck.

For larger spills, such as a half-bottle of wine, cleaning with



the hot water extraction method is recommended, Tuck says.

Mustard, the most notoriously difficult stain to clean, can also be removed from SmartStrand carpet without the use of harsh chemicals. The technique best suited for removing mustard is to allow the stain to dry prior to cleaning.

Time lapse does not play a significant factor in cleaning the carpet, Tuck adds. In the majority of cases, it is best to clean the spill as soon as possible. (As stated above, mustard would be an exception.) Once a stain has dried, the length of time elapsed since the spill makes no difference, giving property managers peace of mind.

Jack Byrne, COO, CriterionBrock, says, "Many of the best features of residential home carpets have come to multifamily, benefiting us all with improved performance. Many of these newer options involve stain and soil resistance, while also delivering long wear life and ease of cleaning."

Byrne says that there are price points for those who want both longer and shorter flooring lifespans.

"Smart apartment managers will want to consider these new options to provide the best flooring value for their particular situations," Byrne says. "What worked five years ago in flooring is no longer a safe path to the best value. It is very important to get expert advice from flooring experts."

Finding Power in Nylon

New Shaw carpet products bring "solution-dyed" nylon to the multifamily housing industry. The color is actually built into the fiber instead of being a surface dye, creating great stain resistance. The wear strength of nylon, combined with R2X stain and soil treatments, provides great ease of cleaning and offers longer life and easier care for apartment maintenance teams or residents.

Mohawk has further improved its highly successful Triexta fiber in products. This durable fiber is offered in many looks and textures.