

## **ROUTINE MAINTENANCE AND CARE OF WOOD TILES**

Tile Tech Wood Deck Tiles are made from solid hardwoods and are the perfect low maintenance and long-lasting decking solution, providing warmth, outstanding weather resistance, and architectural appeal to any deck.

*NOTE: Tile Tech highly recommends the use of safety glasses and puncture resistant gloves when handling. Always test a small area prior to the use of any cleaning and or maintenance product to determine whether the product you are about to apply serves its intended purpose. Follow cleanser manufacturer's instructions and precautions.*

**Visual Observation:** Tile Tech IPE Wood Tiles are produced from natural wood material and can absorb or lose moisture in different climates. Wood Characteristics: Tile Tech Wood Tiles can be made of Ipê and Massanduba hardwoods which contain a rich variety of coloration and graining and are extremely dense and resistant to insects & pests. The natural coloration, shading, and graining variations add to the architectural character and overall visual appeal of the finished product. Check for rocking tiles and adjust or shim immediately. Failure to do so can cause a tripping hazard. Periodically check spacer tabs and immediately replace broken tabs to limit deck movement. Make sure the edge restraint stays intact and structurally sound.

**Cleaning:** Tile Tech Wood Tiles, as needed, can be periodically cleaned and we recommend using a deck cleaning product which safely cleans the wood and also kills mold spores. The deck tiles are ready to re-seal once they are cleaned.

*NOTE: Tile Tech recommends that you test any cleaners or sealants in an inconspicuous area first before applying them to the installed deck.*

**Sealing & Staining:** To help mitigate the loss of moisture resulting in checking and splitting, wood stabilizers or sealants can be used on the top of the boards. Cleaning and or sanding the surface of the wood prior to applying the sealer can help the product penetrate deeper into the wood grain. Due to the extreme density of the tropical hardwood used, all of the applied product may not be absorbed. Follow manufacturer's recommendations to gently wipe off the excess stain for a more even uniform appearance. The installer can also lightly apply glue or end sealer specifically designed for exterior wood to the ends if desired to help prevent splitting. The following manufacturers offer cleaning and sealing products specifically designed for use with exotic hardwoods: Cabots, Defy, Penofin, Messmers & Thompsons.

*NOTE: Small checks and splits are normal and a natural part of the wood.*

**Reapplying Sealers and Stains:** During the first year after initial installation, Tile Tech recommends reapplying the stain or sealant product every four months. Thereafter a yearly application is recommended for optimal results.

**Sanding:** Prior to sealing or staining, a light sanding is recommended of any tropical hardwood decking tiles to expose more of the wood grain. The wood tiles should be lightly sanded using 80-grit sandpaper in order to reduce the appearance of any minor marks, scratches or surface imperfections. After sanding, sweep the tiles and use water to rinse away any remaining dust and allow to dry thoroughly before applying sealer.

*NOTE: Always test any product you apply in an inconspicuous place to make sure it performs as you expect.*

**Maintaining Wood Tile Color:** To better maintain the rich coloration of the wood tiles, you can apply a penetrating oil finish with UV blocker. These products offer UV protection as well as mold and mildew protection. Before applying any finish, first clean and remove any residue from the wood tile as described above and as recommended by the product manufacturer. After your initial coat is applied, an annual maintenance coat will help keep the color vibrant for years to come.

*NOTE: Always test any product you apply in an inconspicuous place to make sure it performs as you expect.*

**Natural Wood Aging:** Tile Tech wood tiles will develop a silvery-gray patina if left to weather naturally and, depending on climatic conditions. If the Weathering Look is preferred, Tile Tech recommends that a coat of wood stabilizer be applied after installation. Some products provide UV protection, allowing the wood tiles to acclimate more uniformly as weather and environmental conditions season the deck. Note: Each board has unique characteristics and will weather at different rates. The amount of direct and indirect sunlight, temperature, humidity, moisture and other local conditions will factor into the time and shading of the deck.

**Commercial Buffing Machines:** Commercial floor buffing or floor scrubber machines are not recommended due to their potential to damage tiles and pedestals with their movement mechanisms.

**Pressure Washing:** Pressure washer can be used to remove built-up dirt, mold or mildew from the wood tiles. CAUTION: Use the lowest PSI for the species of wood you are cleaning. A maximum of 1200 PSI is recommended for Tile Tech Wood Tiles. A professional deck cleaning contractor is recommended to perform the work.

*NOTE: Test an inconspicuous area first and be careful to use the wand in even strokes to avoid lap marks.*

**Snow Removal:**

**Sweeping:** The use of mechanical snow scoopers and blowers is NOT recommended on Tile Tech Wood Tiles and or Pedestal products. A stiff-bristled broom is the recommended method for removing snow from a wood deck, as it causes the least damage to your decking material.

**Shoveling:** Metal shovel should NEVER be used, as this can gouge, scrape or otherwise cause damage the wood decking tiles. Use a plastic shovel, and shovel along the length of the deck boards, instead of across, to minimize damage to the wood grain. Avoid chipping away at ice with a shovel or pick, as this can also damage the decking tiles. Small or narrow plastic shovels can also be used to help get into tighter areas such as stairs and still move with the grain of the wood decking tiles.

**Ice removal:** De-icers and/or salts should NEVER be used on a natural wood deck tiles because of the corrosive nature of the salts. These chemicals can erode any waterproof stain or finish and leave water marks on the wood itself. De-icers absorb most of the moisture in natural materials, which makes the wood more brittle and will cause additional cracking and checking. De-icers can come in a range of compositions, including Sodium Chloride (NaCl), Magnesium Chloride (MgCl<sub>2</sub>), Calcium Chloride (CaCl<sub>2</sub>) and Potassium Chloride (KCl) as well as many other compositions. As an alternative, carefully pour hot water over the iciest areas of the deck and use an outdoor broom to remove the ice and excess water. Sand or kitty litter can also be spread over the deck to help prevent more ice from building up although this may be tracked indoors and should be swept up and cleaned periodically.

**NOTE:** *Tile Tech does not manufacture cleaning/maintenance products and we provide the information contained herein to our customers as an information source only. The products identified may contain chemicals that cause reactions in certain individuals. We also strongly recommend the use of respirators, safety glasses and gloves in handling any materials that contain chemicals. Always test a small area prior to the use of any cleaning/maintenance product to determine whether the product you are about to apply serves its intended purpose. This instruction guide is intended to be used in conjunction with the most up to date version of Tile Tech's IPE Wood Tile Specification Section 07760, which can be found online at [www.tiletechpavers.com](http://www.tiletechpavers.com).*