



**mighty mac**

it's beary clean

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## WICKING

Wicking is a phenomenon that occurs as a carpet dries from cleaning. Usually there is no indication wicking will occur during the cleaning process.

Carpet dries from the bottom to the top. As moisture evaporates from the tips, moisture from below migrates up to even out the moisture levels throughout the fibers. Think of how candle wax travels up the wick to reach the flame.

For example; say a carpet has an old coffee stain on the carpet, the backings, or even in the padding underneath. The flushing of the soils that occurs during the cleaning process may re-liquefy the residual coffee on the backings. The carpet looks fine when the technician leaves. As the carpet dries, that stain on the backing migrates to the top of the fibers and magically appears.

Wicking is more prevalent in loop pile carpets than in cut pile carpets. This is due to the twisting and looping of the fibers make it harder to get in between the fibers to clean.

Removal of wicking stains is usually done by polishing the tips of the fibers with a low moisture product or the use of micro-encapsulation products. The micro-encapsulation process literally pulls the physical soil away from the fiber and surrounds it with a polymer. As it dries, it falls off the tuft and drops into the backings. The soil is removed from the backing during the next regular vacuuming.

If the stain is large or deep, it becomes more difficult. The extreme level requires pulling up the

carpet, replacing the contaminated padding, and cleaning both the front and back of the carpet. The carpet is then reinstalled. If the latex holding the two backings together is damaged, the stains may never come out.

You can see the stains on this carpet cushion (pad). The spill went through the carpet and the backings and soaked the cushion. The Sharpie pen gives you an idea of how large the stain is. This is an example of the severe spills that necessitate removal of the pad.

