

### **Shimming Carpet Seams on Direct Glue Down Applications**

The manufacturing of carpet is a multifaceted process. Because of this, minor variations can occur from roll to roll, or from start of roll to end of roll. Variations in color, texture, and pile height can be noticed. Color variations can be plus or minus 10 % of the manufacturing standards. Pile height issues are more common on attached cushion due to variations in cushion gauge thickness, but can occur in Action Back and Unitary backings as well.

In consideration of variance in pile height at the seam, there are some techniques that can lesson this condition. One method is to shim the floor using tape. This technique will work on virtually any type backing on the market today. Using the tape buildup method you can use several types of tape such as masking tape, duct tape, or carpet tape. The style of tape used will depend on the height you need to achieve. Use a tape that is two inches or wider. The key to success is the adhesion of the tape to the substrate. Since the floor adhesive bond will only be as strong in this location as the bond of the tape. With this in mind, the first step is to make sure the substrate is clean and dry. The second step is to insure good adhesion by using the chosen adhesive as a base for the tape buildup. The third step is to use a ramping technique so the rise will not be a drastic change at the seam.

Let us use the scenario that you have a height difference of 3/64 of an inch between on your main drop and the fill. When these two are joined, the fill piece would stand taller than the drop, making a very noticeable seam. Using the tape buildup method is a quick and sure way of correcting this height issue.

To begin, start by cutting your drop then your fill piece and dry fitting them on the floor. Once the dry fit is complete, take note of which side has the lower pile height. Mark the seam at its center on each end of the room, fold back the carpet, then use a chalk box with white chalk, and pop a line. On the side that has the lower pile height start by spreading a ten to twelve inch wide band of adhesive onto the substrate using the flat side of the trowel. A very thin spread is what you are trying to achieve. Continue spreading the adhesive the length of the carpet; allow the adhesive to dry for approximately fifteen minutes before applying the tape buildup. After the adhesive has set to a tacky state, place your first layer of tape into the adhesive. Make sure that the edge of your first run of tape is on your chalk line and fully embedded into the tacked adhesive. Place additional rows of tape making sure that it completely covers the adhesive spread. Apply additional layers of tape to achieve the desired height, always starting at the chalk line, layering toward the end of the adhesive spread, but stopping short of the previously applied row of tape by at least one inch. This will allow the tape buildup to have the ramping effect, so there will not be a drastic change at the seam.

You can check your progress by allowing the fill piece or second drop (taller nap) to lay back against the chalk line and checking the height with a cut piece from the (shorter) drop.

Once the proper height has been achieved, continue with the proper glue down procedures recommended for the style of carpet you are installing. Always following the adhesive manufactures spread rates and open time.

Greg Raborn  
Technical Services