



STRIP MAPLE FLOORING OVER CONCRETE SLABS WITH RADIANT HEAT

Without impairing the efficiency of the heating plant, strip maple flooring may be installed over concrete slabs in which radiant heating pipes are embedded. Such installations may require the maintenance of slightly higher water temperatures. Boiler temperatures should be controlled to limit the temperature of the slab surface to about 85 degrees, an acceptable level for most mastics. Also, to anticipate rapid changes in temperature, an outside thermostat should be installed.

As in any installation, it is important to employ proper concrete slab construction methods. There are varying specifications, but precautions must be taken to prevent the absorption of ground moisture through the concrete during the non-heating season. It is well to provide a gravel fill beneath the slab, preferably of washed gravel and a vapor barrier of at least 6 mil. polyethylene membrane between the slab and the fill. The maple strip flooring is installed as in any other project, except that if specifications require subfloor plywood, the plywood is not fastened to concrete with either nails or powder-actuated fasteners.

The heating system should be activated at least 4-5 days prior to delivery of the flooring in order to drive excessive moisture out of the slab. Perform a moisture test on the slab before proceeding with installation of the maple. Allow flooring to become acclimated to normal site conditions and then install according to manufacturer's instructions. Regular sanding and finishing methods are then employed to complete the installation.

(Note: It is very important to check flooring and mastic manufacturers' specifications for suitability of use over radiant heating systems.)

If you have any additional questions, please contact MFMA's Technical Director at 847-480-9138.

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