Filtration Soil...
Tiny Particles Can Cause Large Problems

The Mechanism
Various types of soilting occur in homes and offices. One of the most common soils is dust and particulate, the fine specs of material, which are generated from various materials within the environment.

These ambient soils are filtered to some degree when they are circulated through an air conditioning/heating system. All air handling systems have some form of filter device used to help clean the air before it is taken into the system. Depending on their type and the level of maintenance they receive, these filters offer various levels of effectiveness.

There is yet another way that air can be filtered. As air passes out of a room, house or office through cracks under doors or crevices in floors and walls, any porous surface that may be covering these cracks also acts as a filter. Soil accumulates in these areas just as it does on the air conditioning filter. This type of soilting, however, can be much more difficult to remove.

Typical Appearance
One of the most common examples of this “filtration soil” is found on light-colored carpets. The carpet can appear from a range of light gray to black around the perimeter of the room, on and near staircases, or under doors that are usually kept closed. This soilting can also be seen under furnishings with skirts if they are near air currents that form in most buildings.

Air is pulled near or through the carpet fibers and out through tiny cracks or spaces where the wall meets the floor. As the air flows through the carpet and out, it catches a certain amount of airborne soil and holds it. It makes sense then, that the problem generally starts off as a slight dinginess on the carpet and gets progressively darker with time.

Filtration soil can also appear in many other areas, even on vertical surfaces. Wall fabrics, for example, may show soilting around air vents, light switches, or cracks that can form in sheetrock.

How Can It Be Corrected?
There is a principle in cleaning, which suggests that the smaller the particle size of the contaminant, the harder it is to remove. Filtration soil particles vary in size, but are generally extremely fine. They can also be very oily, forming an even stronger bond to fibers. Removal of this type of soil, therefore, tends to be very difficult, especially when sensitive fibers are involved.
There are many spot cleaners, which can be purchased at local stores. These may remove much of the soil, unfortunately, most leave sticky residues that will only accelerate the problem. Even worse, some detergents are not suitable for particular carpets or fabrics.

If corrective measures are needed, a reputable cleaner should be contacted for assistance.

**Is There a Way To Prevent The Problem?**
A better alternative is to use maintenance techniques, which are preventive, rather than corrective.

In some instances, simply installing more efficient filters on the air handling system can help. More effective prevention might involve actually sealing the cracks where airflow causes the filtration soiling problems.

Regular maintenance can also slow the development of this unsightly problem. Thorough vacuuming around the perimeter of rooms should always be done on a regular basis. If you wait to see the problem, you have waited too long. The same holds true for wall fabrics...vacuuming is a must.

Also, a regularly scheduled maintenance program, which includes overall cleaning, should be considered. This type of program can be a big step toward preventing unsightly soiling.

**Let Us Help...**
For more guidance regarding filtration soil, contact your nearest Fiber-Seal Service Center, or the Technical Department of Fiber-Seal Services International.

Fiber-Seal fabric professionals in dozens of locations in the U.S. and around the world have gathered a storehouse of information about the never-ending variety of maintenance issues, and about the most appropriate cleaning procedures, spot removal and preventive care.

**Fiber-Seal On Line**
For more information about Fiber-Seal, visit us at our web site, www.fiberseal.com. Our E-mail is info@fiberseal.com.