

Step-by-Step Process for Removing Tile and Replacing in the Presence of Underlayment Joint Ridging and Tunneling

Ridging and tunneling occur in the joints of the underlayment. Although difficult to precisely identify what causes these problems, the two most likely causes are movement of the underlayment panels and problems associated with floor patch used to fill gaps at the underlayment joints.

Tools needed:

Multi Tool, crow bar, box cutter, pencil or marker, 18" paper cutter, replacement tile, Elements of Nature® M5 adhesive, 2" or 3" paint brush, regular paint roller, paint tray, small bucket, 20 oz. bottle of water, Heat gun, gloves, Ardex feather finish floor patch, 3" or 4" putty knife and a belt sander. You may need other tools for moving kitchen islands, toilets and baseboards; also the use of safety goggles may be needed.

Steps for Removal:

1. Identify the tile that ridging is telegraphing through and mark it for removal.
2. Heat affected tile with a heat gun. Heat up no more than 2-3 tile at a time, as they will cool before you get a chance to remove them.
3. Remove tile using the Multi Tool (crow bar can be used) by running the flat blade underneath the tile and pulling up with the other hand on the tile. Move the tool back and forth as you pull the tile up.
4. Once you remove all of the tile, make sure and prep the floor by sanding and patching where needed.
5. Sand any ridging and fill any gaps 1/8" and larger and let dry. (Approx. 15 min.) Sand the patched area if needed.
6. Sweep or blow off any debris on floor.
7. Place new tile in position and see if any trimming is needed.
8. Place tile on cutter and cut off the amount needed. There are two sides to the tile that have a built in grout line, make sure to cut the side of the tile where the grout line is not.
9. You may need a belt sander to buff the edge to replace the micro bevel edge, depending on how much is cut off.
10. Keep laying the new tile and cutting to fit and once all in an area are done then remove tile and put down the glue.
11. Using a roller, apply the M5 adhesive in a thin even coat in the area the tile will go in.
12. Apply M5 to the back of the tile as well.
13. Make sure the glue on the floor has dried (approx. 10-15 minutes) before replacing tile.
14. Roll installation with 3-section 100 lb. roller and clean up.