



Seam Peaking in Stretch-In Carpet Installations

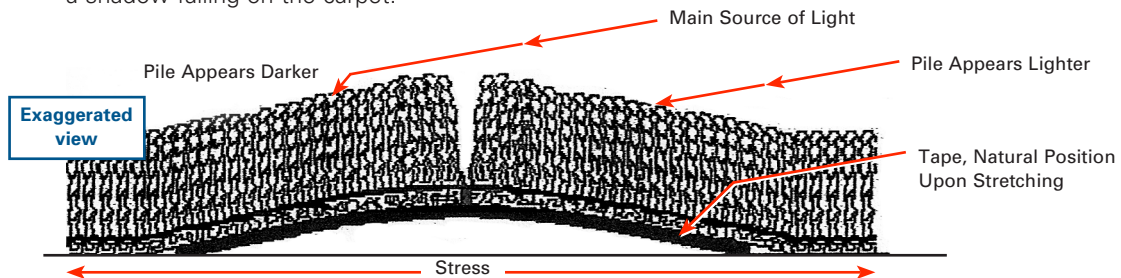
Seam peaking is normal when joining carpet and then stretching the carpet into place.

Adequate carpet tension is necessary to ensure that in normal use conditions, the carpet does not ruck (waves in the carpet surface) and possibly cause loss of performance life.

Peaking occurs when a carpet is stretched at right angles to a seam because the combined carpet backing (primary backing, adhesive and secondary backing) absorbs the forces of stretching until it reaches the point where the carpet has been joined together with seaming tape adhered only to the carpet's secondary backing.

As the stretch forces are applied to the seamed area, the seaming tape is pulled upward to align itself with the approximate centre of the combined carpet backing. This creates an elevation or lump in the carpet along the seam which consequently, causes the pile to gap open in a V-configuration.

When the main source of light is such that it falls at an angle across the peaked seam, the pile on the side closer to the light source receives and reflects more light per unit of area than the pile on the other side of the seam. The resulting difference in shade is similar to the effect of a shadow falling on the carpet.



To verify that an apparent shade difference is caused by seam peaking, the seams should be viewed with a powerful overhead light while all side lighting is eliminated. When conducting such a test on a cut pile carpet, ensure that the pile is brushed in a consistent direction on both sides of the seam.

Australasian Standard – AS/NZS 2455.1:2007 provides guidance on good installation practice that will help to minimise seam visibility and peaking.

Possible problems may also be avoided if retail sales staff and prospective purchasers discuss the installation characteristics of the products at point-of-purchase so there is a clear understanding that invisible seams may not be possible to achieve with stretch-in carpet installations.

Further Information

Contact Carpet Institute of Australia Limited on 03 9804 5559, email info@carpetoz.com.au or visit our website www.carpetinstitute.com.au

About the Carpet Institute of Australia

The Carpet Institute of Australia Limited (CIAL) is the lead industry association for Australia's \$1.6 billion carpet industry. CIAL represents carpet manufacturers accounting for 95% of Australian carpet production, as well as retailers and suppliers of goods and services to the industry.

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