Making Simple Repairs: Bathtub and Shower Cracks

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Cleaning mildew, replacing tile, repairing wood rot behind the tub or shower wall all can cost you money from your security deposit. Avoid this loss with a few simple precautions.

Supplies Needed:

• Waterproof grout – powder form
• Plastic sealer – pre-mixed

How To Fix

Prepare the Surface

1. Remove the old crack filler from the crack. Use a knife, small flat-head screwdriver, or grout remover.

2. Wash the surface to remove soap, grease, and dirt.

3. Dry the surface well before making repairs.

Using Grout

• Put a small amount of grout in a bowl.
• Slowly add water and mix until you have a thick paste.
• Put this mixture in the crack with a putty knife or similar tool.
• Press the grout into the crack.
• Smooth the surface with your finger or a small cloth.
• Wipe excess grout from the wall and tub with an old cloth or sponge before it gets dry.
• Let the grout dry well before anyone uses the tub. (The grout will last much longer and resist mildew better if it is sealed.) To seal paint the grout with a grout sealer after it has dried. For best results use two coats of grout sealer.

Using Plastic Sealer

You may use a plastic sealer instead of grout in the crack between the tub and wall. Plastic sealer comes in a tube ready to use.

• Squeeze the sealer from the tube in a small ribbon along the crack.
• Use a putty knife or spatula to press the sealer down to fill the crack.

• Smooth the surface. Work fast, the sealer dries quickly. You can use the shower or tub almost immediately after finishing.

• Keep the cap on the tube when you’re not using it.

**Your Reward**

• A better looking bathroom.

• Prevention of water damage to wall structure.

• Helps prevent mildew.

• Good maintenance will help you get your security deposit refund when you leave.

Archival copy: for current recommendations see http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu or your local extension office.