

# RENOVATION OF A MASTER BATH

the story of the never-ending renovation

2008—2010





## RENOVATION

### TAKE 2

What began as an exciting and promising home-improvement project has turned into an ongoing headache.

When water began to leak through the ceiling below our master bath shower, we were really disappointed. In May of 2007, I had contracted with a company—Caribbean Ceramic Tile—to tile the floor of my Master Bathroom including the shower floor. One year later, the shower was leaking through the floor to the 1st floor below.

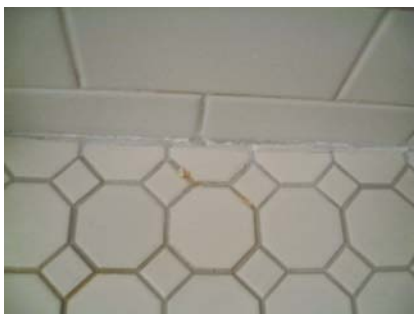
My husband and I tried to find a reputable company this time around. We thought we had with 'A Bath Pro'. They were part of a list of recommended companies by our realtor.



**BEFORE THE TILE WAS REMOVED**

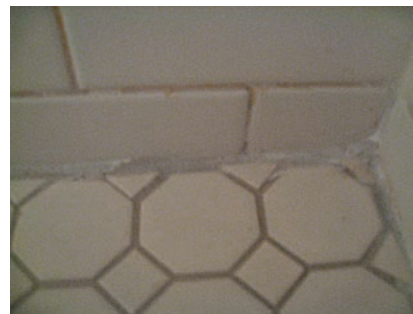


**AFTER THE TILE WAS REMOVED**



#### INITIAL REPAIR 1

Grout that had fallen out was initially replaced with caulk.



#### INITIAL REPAIR 1 (DETAIL)



#### INITIAL REPAIR 2

The tile was cut very haphazard. Here is a photo of the drain with extra-thick grout-lines being filed with caulk after the grout had come out.

# INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS

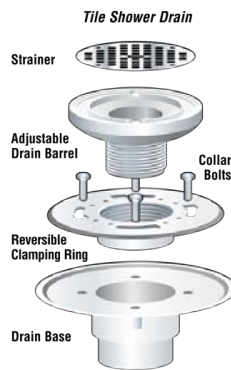
It was at this point we decided to get informed about shower pan liners. Namely, OATEY shower pan liners. I went to their website and found some information about correct installation of their product.

As you can see by the diagram (FIG A), a mortar bed was supposed to be installed prior to the OATEY shower pan liner.

The photo below shows a bare plywood subfloor where a mortar bed should be.

## Shower Pan Liner

### APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS



Oatey provides several products needed for tile shower installations. Choose from the list below before you start your project:

**PVC or CPE Pan Liner** – referred to as pan liner or membrane in our instructions.

**Tile Shower Drain** – PVC for PVC drain pipe or ABS for ABS drain pipe. Each is available with stainless steel, polished brass or white plastic strainer.

**X-15 or CPE (Oateyweld) bonding adhesive** – For use on dam corners or seaming use X-15 for PVC and Oateyweld for CPE.

**PVC or ABS solvent cement** – PVC solvent cement and primer for PVC drainage systems or ABS solvent cement for ABS drainage systems. Use the appropriate cement (and primer for PVC) to solvent weld tile shower drain to the drain pipe.

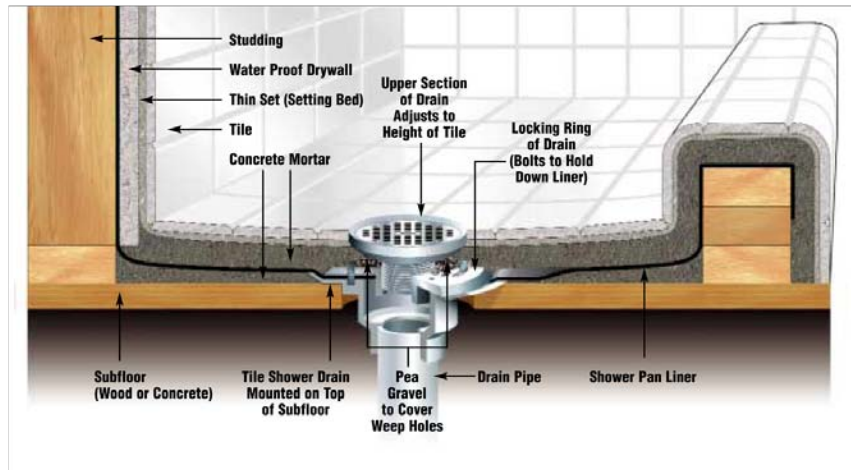
**Dam Corners** – For outside corners and over the curb preformed dam corners are available, which can be used for PVC or CPE pan liner applications.

*Note: Oatey pan liner instructions assume the shower framing has been constructed and the flooring is plywood. Generally the same principles apply to concrete flooring where the sloped mortar bed is applied beneath the pan liner. Also the instructions apply to either PVC pan liner or CPE pan liner which are installed the same with the exception of the bonding adhesive used for seaming and dam corner applications. If you have questions regarding pan liner installation that are not covered in these instructions, contact Oatey customer service at 800-321-9532 and you will be referred to someone who can assist you.*

### Shower Pan Installation

1. For typical wood subfloor cut a 4.5" diameter hole in the center of the shower floor where the tile shower drain would normally be positioned. Disassemble the *tile shower drain*. Lay the tile shower drain base in the opening so the flange of the drain base rests on top of the subfloor. Solvent weld the drain base to the drain pipe using the appropriate solvent cement. See Figure A.
2. Cover the drain base opening with duct tape to keep debris from entering the drain. Begin by applying Portland Sand/ Cement mixture mortar bed over the subfloor at 1/4" per foot slope from the wall framing to the top of, but not over, the drain base. After this step the sloped mortar bed should be flush with the top surface of the drain base.

Figure A



# PHOTOS OF THE AFTERMATH



**AFTER THE TILE WAS REMOVED**  
Shows the shower pan liner with tile removed.



**DETAIL 1**  
Another view showing the wet plywood directly beneath the shower pan liner. (Should be a mortar bed.)



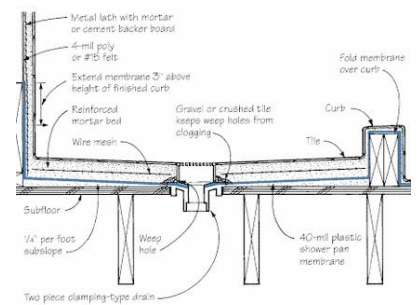
**DETAIL 2**



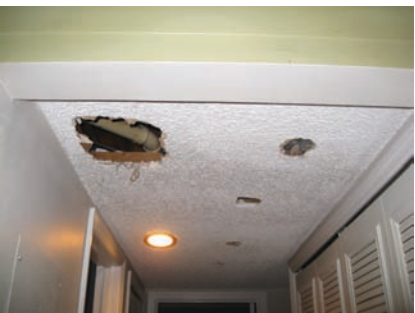
**SLOPED UP TO DRAIN**  
Shows the shower pan liner actually sloping upwards towards the drain. Water has to climb uphill to get out.



**OATEY SHOWER PAN LINER**  
'A Bath Pro' would not install the shower pan liner according to the manufacturer's installation instructions.



**TILE COUNCIL OF AMERICA**  
States that you need lath or other reinforcing in the pre-slope when going over a wood floor. (I didn't even get into this detail with 'A Bath Pro' since they didn't think a pre-slope was necessary in the first place.)



**CEILING DAMAGE ON 1ST FLOOR**  
Ceiling underneath the Master Bath Shower contains several holes from investigating origin of leak.



**CEILING (DETAIL1)**  
Shows the damp plywood where the water came through.



**CEILING (DETAIL2)**  
The hairline crack where water damaged the ceiling a second time.

# FILED WITH THE BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU

SATURDAY, APRIL 24, 2010

## EXPLAIN THE ISSUE

Primary Issue: Repair Issue

Secondary Issue: Service Issue

On 10/15/2008, A Bath Pro was hired to fix a leaking shower in our 2nd floor Master bath. The man who actually did the tile work was Paul. He assessed that the problem was with the shower pan, so on 10/27/2008 he tore out the tile work and re-tiled - adding a new shower pan.

Just a little over a year later (01/06/2010), the leak returned. Along with the leak, we noticed grout falling out from between tile in the walls and between the tiles on the shower floor. On Wednesday, 01/20/2010, Paul (& his brother) tried to fix the problem by caulking the areas where the grout had fallen out. Paul said that the grout loosening may be from the house shifting/settling. Our house was built in the 70's. After a water test, there was still a leak. When they returned, they tore the tile away from the floor and about 9" up the wall. Paul told us that he had found the problem. He said he had inadvertently folded the corner of the rubber shower pan liner incorrectly on one of the corners. After they tore out the work that they had done, we realized—notwithstanding what he had told us about the fold—there was a bigger problem; he had skipped a very important step. According to OATEY—the shower pan manufacturer—as well as the Tile Council of America, a mortar bed was supposed to have been installed 'underneath' the shower pan liner, then the shower pan liner installed and on top of that, another mortar bed. This was not how A Bath Pro contractor - Paul- installed it.

Both my husband and I spoke with the owner - Patrick Cassidy- about this. On 01/25/2010, his response to me was that "If I didn't like the work that Paul had done, I could go somewhere else." He also said, "In all the 20 years that Paul had been working for him, they had only had one other complaint." He said we could take this up with Paul when he came back the next day to complete the re-install. So, my husband asked Paul if he would install the shower pan liner according to the manufacturer's specifications. He said he'd been installing shower's for over 20 years and he wasn't going to change the way he did it.

A Bath Pro's website states, "We are the only refinishing company registered with the Better Business Bureau. We do quality work using quality technicians and always use the finest products. We don't take short cuts to reduce our costs or improve our profits. We give a full 100% guarantee and we will be around in 5 years to honor that guarantee."

I guess that guarantee didn't apply to us.

## DESIRED OUTCOME

Refund

At this point, I am not confident that A Bath Pro will actually stand behind their work. Because of that, I would like a full refund of \$2, 270. 45 in order to find another company to do the work correctly.

**YOUR COMPLAINT HAS BEEN SUBMITTED AND HAS BEEN ASSIGNED TRACKING NUMBER 17D45-97DDB-B54C4-D9B8F-09EF3-9FF32-21 AN EMAIL WILL ARRIVE SHORTLY CONFIRMING YOUR COMPLAINT.  
WE SUGGEST YOU PRINT A COPY OF THIS PAGE FOR YOUR RECORDS**