How to Clean Magnesium Chloride Stains

Magnesium chloride stains are most commonly caused by the salt that is used to de-ice roads in winter. A magnesium chloride stain is relatively easy to clean, because magnesium chloride is a deliquescent compound, a property that makes it soluble in water and alcohol. Follow the steps outlined below to easily clean a magnesium chloride stain.

1. Make a solution of one part white distilled vinegar and one part cold water in a spray bottle. Spray the solution onto the stained area and leave it on for a few minutes to give it time to absorb the magnesium chloride from the stained surface. Blot the liquid with a dry towel. Repeat these steps until the stains are removed.

2. Pre-treat a stained garment by soaking it overnight in a vinegar bath. Make a 50/50 solution of cold water and white distilled vinegar in a sink or bucket. Immerse the garment in the solution and leave it in overnight. Follow this up by washing it in cold water. Repeat the steps if the magnesium chloride stains remain.

3. Form a paste from equal parts salt, flour and vinegar. Apply this paste to the stain, rubbing it in. Leave the paste on the stained area for an hour to allow for maximum absorption. Clean up the paste with a plastic-bristled brush and buff the area with a soft, dry cloth.

4. Clean magnesium chloride stains from carpet using some carpet shampoo. Vacuum up any dry residue from the stained area. Apply some carpet shampoo to the stain and leave it on for a few minutes to allow the shampoo to dissolve the magnesium chloride. Finally, using a sponge and lukewarm water, "rinse" the spot by blotting--not rubbing--the excess moisture.

5. Wet a cotton ball or gauze pad with oxalic acid and use this to gently blot the stained area. Do not rub or scrub, because this will cause the stain to spread. The oxalic acid's acidic content helps to break down the magnesium chloride in the stain. Rinse off the area using cold water and a clean white cloth or a sponge.

6. Remove magnesium chloride stains from your shoes using Leather Mate (see Resources). Place a damp cloth over the stained area and leave it on for eight or more hours. Follow the directions on the Leather Mate label to apply it to your shoes. Continue maintaining your shoes with the Leather Mate to prevent further staining.