

Dust Second Only To Trees In Johannesburg

Johannesburg is known for its trees with the country's commercial capital being described as the biggest man-made forest in the world. It's fortunate that the city's founders decide to invest so heavily in greenery because Johannesburg is also, quite literally, a dustbowl.

The mine dumps of the Witwatersrand produce so much dust that South Africa in 1912 became the first country in the world to legislate against the micro-particles that have been blamed for everything from asthma to cancer.

"The toxic West Rand mine dust that spirals off our mine dumps has been found as far afield as Tasmania in Australia," says Rika van Rooyen of leading hygiene and related services provider, Bidvest Steiner.

Ms Van Rooyen said that as mine dumps are re-mined using hyperfine milling processes to recover any gold that outdated mining techniques may have left behind, the problem of dust in Johannesburg is likely to get even worse. "For businesses that interact with a lot of walk-in customers, the first line of defence against dust tramped in from outside, is the entrance way walk-off mats. This humble device can play a huge role in reducing employee and visitor exposure to airborne allergens that may have an adverse impact on human health," said Ms Van Rooyen.

Dust control mats that are built for purpose, is large enough and serviced and cleaned regularly to ensure that the majority of foot-borne debris will be stopped at the entrance, while also helping to securely trap any airborne dust that may settle on the mats.

A well-built dust mat will protect the floor, remove dirt and moisture from shoes, keep entrance ways looking presentable and help reduce slips and falls.

"Dust mats are not simply one of the first impressions that visitors have of a building, they should also serve functional purposes. All too often companies will devote a lot of attention to how their corporate identity looks woven into the dust mat, without considering whether it effectively scrapes and traps dirt, dries shoes to prevent falls, and cleans shoes to extend floor lifespans," says Ms Van Rooyen.

"Planting trees in Johannesburg was an important step in helping to eliminate the city's dust problem. Entrance way dust mats are another effective way of ensuring those of us who work in the city's buildings don't have to cough and sneeze our way to 5pm," concluded Ms Van Rooyen.