<table>
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<th>Question</th>
<th>The underside of the counter located over the dishwasher is starting to warp and buckle from the moisture released by the dishwasher. We have discovered that the underside of the counter is very porous and not made to withstand the moisture released during regular use of the dishwasher. Is there some sort of coating that can be placed on the underside of the counter to protect it from the moisture? I have stopped using my dishwasher because the counter is being damaged. Should the countertop have been installed differently over the dishwasher opening?</th>
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| Answer | You say that the bottom of the countertop is porous. Is the bottom side of the countertop Corian® itself or is there an underlayment or other surface under the Corian® such as a wood decking? You say that the bottom is warping; does that mean that the top is not? Here are a couple of observations that cause me to ask these questions. In general, Corian® is totally nonporous. Although the bottom side may be bumpy and perhaps a little pitted, it is not at all porous, so moisture itself will not cause it to warp. However Corian® can warp when subjected to high heat (about 260 degrees and above). In your case I would think that the heat in the steam could cause the Corian® to warp (but not the moisture). If this is the case I would question the actual condition of the dishwasher. If that much steam is contacting the countertop and the heat is causing it to warp, I would really be concerned about the overall safety of the unit itself. Should not the steam be vented so as not to contact the countertop or cabinetry?  

Customer response…  
The bottom side of the countertop has a wood decking. It is this wood area that is warping. The Corian® on the top surface is not warping, only the bottom wood area is warping. I think the venting of the dishwasher is fairly standard. It is a Kitchen Aid model purchased last year, and it is a common model. There is a vent on the top left side of the door, which is directly underneath the countertop area that is damaged.  

Fabrication Manager response…  
As I suspected, it is the wood build-up not the Corian® that is warping. This wood strip acts as a spacer to raise the Corian® level to a height as to leave proper clearance for the dishwasher to slide under. This strip also acts as a support piece and gives you a way to attach the dishwasher to the countertop. The pictures show that the Corian® and strip appear to done properly. As far as the steam damage goes, here are some thoughts and ideas: This steam vent and subsequent damage seems very unusual. Luckily this is only damaging the support strip. If this countertop was a conventional laminate type vs. Corian® I would suspect that you would have a significant problem on your hands as those types of countertops would clearly be permanently damaged by this condition. Again I find it unusual that this steam comes out directly onto the bottom of the countertop. It is hard to tell from the pictures but it appears to me that the dishwasher may be installed too far back. I think that it should protrude further out. This would allow the steam to vent into the wide open kitchen space directly in front of the countertop edge. This is how my dishwasher is installed at my own home. Most coincidently, I have a unit (same brand) and very similar to yours. When steam comes out the vent it escapes out the front of the door and not underneath the countertop. A good way to check the installation is to look at a couple things. First, the front of the inner opening of the dishwasher should not be behind the face frame of the cabinet. In fact it should be just a tiny bit in front of it. In my home, the top of the dishwasher door is in front of the countertop edge. In your picture it appears that yours is under and a bit behind the edge. Ultimately the only thing I can really say for certain is that the Corian® itself is fine. I would suggest pursuing the overall dishwasher installation to be sure all is proper there. If I am incorrect and the unit is installed correctly you may want to remove the wood piece that is being damaged and replace it with a strip of Corian®. However, I would be a little nervous about that steam hitting the bottom side of the countertop. The best result would be to get the steam venting out the front if possible. |