

ADDRESSING SUSTAINABILITY and Environmental Concerns:

A Masland Contract White Paper

Specifiers in today's marketplace are tasked with making interior design selections that not only reduce a building's impact on human health and the environment, but offers high performance value and enhanced design aesthetics as well. Masland Contract has recently made two changes to its carpet tile backing, significantly increasing the amount of recycled content and reducing the environmental impact of the backing. The following white paper discusses the need for sustainability and safe environmental practices - both tenets upheld by EarthWise, Masland Contract's new modular backing.

SUSTAINABILITY & ITS GROWING IMPACT ON CONTRACT DESIGN

Today's specifiers are keenly aware of the impact of construction materials on the environment. Building construction uses large quantities of natural resources; according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), construction activities use 60% of the raw materials, outside of food and fuel, used in the entire U.S. economy. Of the nearly 170 million tons of annual building construction, renovation, and demolition derived wastes account for almost 60% of the nation's non-industrial, non-hazardous solid waste generation.(REFERENCE 1)

Specifiers now focus their efforts in "green building." Green building is defined by the Office of the Federal Environmental Executive as "the practice of 1) increasing the efficiency with which buildings and their sites use energy, water, and materials, and 2) reducing building impacts on human health and the environment, through better siting, design, construction, operation, maintenance, and removal - the complete building life cycle."(REFERENCE 2)

While the concept of green building is not new, it got its impetus in 1998, when U.S. President Bill Clinton issued the first of three "greening" executive orders. The first legislation called upon the federal government to improve its use of recycled and "environmentally preferred" products, including building products. The second order, issued in 1999, encouraged government agencies to improve energy management and reduce emissions in federal buildings through better design, construction, and operation. The third legislation, issued in 2000, charged federal agencies to integrate environmental accountability into day-to-day decision making and long-term planning.(REFERENCE 3)

To address the need for sustainable building verification, the U.S. Green Building Council membership approved the first version of its Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) green building certification program in late 1998. LEED certification provides independent verification of a building or neighborhood's green features, allowing for the design, construction, operations and maintenance of resource-efficient, high-performing, healthy, cost-effective buildings.

LEED certification means healthier, more productive places, reduced stress on the environment by encouraging energy and resource-efficient buildings, savings from increased building value, higher lease rates and decreased utility costs. A total of 88 of all Fortune 100 companies already are using LEED; between 2008 and 2012, there was dramatic growth in the percentage of firms that built green to achieve lower operating costs, according to the U.S. Green Building Council.(REFERENCE 4)



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CREATING A MORE HEALTHY INTERIOR ENVIRONMENT

In considering the interior environment, specifiers are cognizant of the basic manufacturing components of construction material in an effort to attain greater transparency in ingredient materials selection.

Phthalates are a class of synthetic chemicals that are widely used in a variety of consumer products including building materials, medical devices, food wrap, packaging, and automotive parts. The annual global production of phthalates is estimated to be 11 billion pounds.(REFERENCE 5) Phthalates have been used in PVC carpet backing to provide dimensional stability to products.

Phthalates have been linked to a number of negative environmental and human health impacts; restrictions on their use have been launched by numerous global entities. (REFERENCE 6)

EARTHWISE MODULAR BACKING: Masland Contract's Response to Sustainability and Environmental Concerns

Masland Contract is meeting the needs of specifiers around the globe with the introduction of its new EarthWise modular backing. In developing the new backing formula, Masland Contract's research and design specialists have eliminated phthalates. EarthWise utilizes an inactive plasticizer that is toxicologically different; studies show the non-phthalate formula is not a carcinogen, mutagen or reproductive toxicant.

Masland Contract has also significantly increased the percentage of pre-consumer recycled content in the EarthWise modular backing. With this increase, pre-consumer and post-consumer content now exceeds 53%. Such an improvement elevates Masland Contract products over many available options in the marketplace today. With the new EarthWise modular backing, Masland Contract collections, such as Speak and FIT, offer a total recycled content (including face fiber) reaching up to 48%.

With these two key changes in hand, Masland Contract is in the process of updating all Environmental Product Declarations and Health Product Declarations. These statements give assurance to specifiers that Masland Contract products meet all standards in today's "green building" climate.

"Specifiers are looking for greater transparency in ingredient materials selection," says Lee Martin, President of Masland Contract. "Our EarthWise modular backing meets those needs with eco-friendly components for a healthier environment."

REFERENCES

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