

Sponsored: Green underfoot...is it grass?

When its time to replace the flooring, housing providers should consider a product's immediate or global impact on the environment. Grass is probably the greenest and the simplest surface to have under foot, but not very practical for indoor living! Hardwood, while a common feature in many buildings, is not as environmentally friendly as it looks.

Fortunately, most carpet manufacturers use a sustainable manufacturing process and recyclable products. Plus, carpets can actually reduce allergies and environmental sensitivities better than hardwood.

New or recycled?

Post-consumer collection and recycling systems are offered by individual carpet manufacturers for eligible nylon carpets. Carpet tiles are a great example of a product with recycled content, reduced waste on installation, and a higher than average broadloom lifespan.

What's in your flooring?

The carpet and rug industry use a labeling system to identify materials with fewer volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in the carpet fiber or in the adhesive used in the installation. These low-VOC products improve indoor air quality, a major consideration of a green building. Hardwood floor finishes contain VOCs that are released into the air, reacting with oxides of nitrogen and sunlight to form ground-level ozone.

Reduce environmental sensitivities

It is a common myth that carpet lends itself to allergens and other

sensitivities like dirt. In fact, carpeting acts as a filter for irritants, which is why it requires regular maintenance, i.e.: weekly vacuuming and bi-yearly cleaning. While smooth floor surfaces let you see the dirt more clearly, they actually allow the allergens to recirculate into the air. Independent testing proves that equal amounts of dust particles are nine times more airborne in a hard floor surface environment than in a carpeted area.

Years ago, the Swedish government actually outlawed carpet. As a country, they were so insistent that carpets caused allergy concerns that households everywhere converted to hard surface flooring. Respiratory issues increased, and after a while, the country quickly backpedalled.

Having a green environment or having a green product equal the same thing: better life quality for all of us and the world in which we live.

Melanie Gibson, Flooring Manager

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