



The Resilient Floor Covering Institute (RFCI) is a trade association of North American manufacturers of resilient flooring products, as well as suppliers of raw materials and flooring sundries.

Flooring Products Certification Program For Indoor Air Quality

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FloorScore Program Summary

Indoor air quality is an important issue because most people spend as much as 90% of their time indoors at home, work, or school. Poor indoor air quality can be caused by a number of factors, including inadequate ventilation, poor cleaning, and excessive emissions of volatile organic compounds.

The FloorScore program, developed by the Resilient Floor Covering Institute (RFCI) in conjunction with Scientific Certification Systems (SCS), tests and certifies flooring products for compliance with indoor air quality emission requirements adopted in California. Flooring products include vinyl, linoleum, non-PVC resilient flooring, laminate flooring, wood flooring, ceramic flooring, rubber flooring, wall base, and associated sundries. A flooring product bearing the FloorScore seal has been independently certified by SCS to comply with the volatile organic compound emissions criteria of the California Section 01350 program. These flooring products qualify for use in high performance schools and office buildings in California. Thus, products with the FloorScore seal have passed a third party certification process and are recognized as contributing to good indoor air quality in order to protect human health.

This booklet explains in plain words what that means.



Clear Facts about Indoor Air

How clean was
the air you just
inhaled?

Indoor air quality (IAQ) in a building depends on many factors, including:

- how well the HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) system and filters are maintained
- how well and how often the rooms are cleaned
- the people, activities and furnishings in the building
- the outdoor environment, and
- surfaces and finishes throughout.

Healthy air contributes to better learning in schools, improved productivity in offices and more comfortable homes. Poor IAQ can be a factor in a variety of health problems, such as headaches and dizziness and more serious long-term effects.

In terms of IAQ, one issue is the emission level of particular volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Resilient flooring and adhesives are typically low-emitting materials.

Today, there's a comprehensive program to determine whether flooring products satisfy the low emission requirements for VOCs listed under the California Section 01350 IAQ program: FloorScore.

DETAILS ARE AT WWW.RFCI.COM.



FloorScore

The New Certification
Program for Indoor
Air Quality

It's not an issue of simply measuring total VOCs in the air you're breathing. What matters is the nature of particular VOCs that may be in the air.

FloorScore is a voluntary program that complies with the IAQ performance requirements for low emitting building materials as independently established by SCS-EC-10-2004, which includes compliance with the California Section 01350 requirements for listed VOCs in schools and state office buildings.

Section 01350, which was developed by a California interagency task force on sustainable buildings, includes maximum emission concentrations for more than 78 VOCs emitted from building materials in schools and office buildings. These emission concentrations are based on one-half of the Chronic Reference Exposure Levels for listed VOCs established by the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment. CHPS, the Collaborative for High Performance Schools, has adopted Section 01350 for schools in California. In addition, the California Department of General Services has incorporated the Section 01350 low VOC emitting criteria in its standard agreement for all professional architectural and engineering services.

See more information at www.chps.net and www.ciwmb.ca.gov/greenbuilding/specs/section01350.



SCIENTIFIC CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS

The Independent Authority

SCS is an internationally recognized third-party evaluation, testing, and certification organization. SCS programs span a wide cross-section of the economy, including consumer products, the energy industry, manufacturing and retail, and home improvement and construction.

As a third party independent certification firm, SCS audits and determines whether products qualify for the FloorScore seal by meeting the requirements of SCS-EC-10-2004. Under this program, SCS (1) reviews all VOC emissions test reports for particular products generated by independent testing laboratories; (2) determines whether those test results meet the California Section 01350 requirements for listed VOCs; and (3) conducts periodic manufacturing plant inspections to review product formulas, processing, and quality control to ensure the continuing integrity of the FloorScore seal.

See SCS-EC-10-2004 at www.scscertified.com.



Testing

Rigorous testing is the backbone of FloorScore. Representative flooring samples are tested in strict accordance with the California Department of Health Services Standard Practice for the Testing of Volatile Organic Emissions from Various Sources Using Small-Scale Environmental Chambers (CA/DHS/EHLB/R-174). This government-developed practice outlines the requirements for sample collection, packaging and shipment, test specimen preparation and conditioning, chamber testing, chemical analysis, and test reporting.

Test results must comply with the requirements outlined in SCS-EC-10-2004 Environmental Certification Program - Indoor Air Quality Performance, which uses the emission concentrations for listed VOCs under the California Section 01350 program.

See www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/deodc/ehlb/iaq/VOCS/Practice.htm for complete testing specifications.

Labeling/Qualified Product Listing, Installation and Maintenance



Labeling/Qualified Product Listing

Flooring products that meet the FloorScore program requirements in effect at the time of certification can display the FloorScore label, seen at bottom left. For a list of all qualified flooring products, click FloorScore IAQ Program at www.RFCL.com or at www.scs-certified.com.

Installation

Emissions from flooring materials typically peak during installation, when adhesives are wet and packaged flooring materials are unwrapped and exposed to air. Adequate ventilation during installation helps to reduce VOC concentrations.

Open windows and doors help diffuse VOCs with fresh air, while fans, air conditioners and other venting appliances that direct the air outside can prevent temporarily heightened emissions from circulating through a building.

Maintenance

Optimum initial maintenance for each flooring product is recommended by its manufacturer, and best practices for continued maintenance are recommended by the flooring manufacturer and floor maintenance supplier. Low and/or no VOC floor cleaners and floor finishes are available.



What does all this mean to you?

If you are an architect, designer, specifier or building owner, the FloorScore seal on a product will help improve overall IAQ. FloorScore cannot guarantee good health, but it does affirm that you are using a flooring product that has been independently verified to meet recognized performance criteria for listed VOCs under the California Section 01350 program.

If you work in an office or have children in school where new flooring is installed - or if you are simply concerned about indoor air quality - the FloorScore seal means you can “breathe easier” because the floor is a low emitting building material as recognized by CHPS.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q Where can I find a list of flooring products that have earned the FloorScore seal?

A A current list is maintained at www.RFCI.com and at www.scs-certified.com.

Q Where can I find the FloorScore test procedure and certification requirements?

A At www.RFCI.com and at www.scs-certified.com.

Q In short, what does FloorScore require?

A To earn the FloorScore seal, a flooring product must satisfy the requirements of the SCS-EC-10-2004 Environmental Certification Program - Indoor Air Quality Performance, which includes: (1) testing demonstrating compliance with emission concentrations for listed VOCs under California Section 01350; (2) manufacturing facility site audits; (3) annual product re-testing; (4) product record keeping; and (5) a documented quality control plan.

Q Why does IAQ matter to me?

A If you're like most people, you spend over 90% of your life indoors.

Q Can IAQ really be improved?

A Certainly, with any or all of these five strategies:

1. improve the HVAC system design and maintenance
2. ensure adequate ventilation with clean air
3. improve air filtering
4. schedule maintenance or remodeling for minimum impact
5. control the sources of VOCs

Q Are some people more sensitive to VOCs than others?

A Yes. During installation when VOC levels can be higher, people who are sensitive to odors or chemicals should avoid the area.

Q Why is hard surface flooring recommended for classrooms, offices and homes?

A Hard surface floors are easy to clean and maintain because they provide a one-dimensional surface that doesn't absorb odors, spills, dust or soil. They also don't easily retain moisture, which can promote the growth of microorganisms, such as dust mites and mold, that can contribute to poor IAQ.

Q Where can I learn more?

A The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) maintains a web site that provides information on indoor air quality at www.epa.gov/iaq/ia-intro.html



Glossary

California Section 01350: A program of special environmental, sustainable and “green” building practices established by a California interagency task force which includes maximum emission concentrations in schools and office buildings for listed VOCs emitted from building materials. See www.ciwmb.ca.gov/greenbuilding/specs/section01350 for more information

IAQ: indoor air quality

VOCs: volatile organic compounds

Disclaimer

The FloorScore seal certifies whether a flooring product complies with SCS-EC-10-2004, which includes the requirements for listed VOCs under the California Section 01350 program (effective Dec. 12, 2002). RFCI neither intends to nor is independently creating, endorsing or adopting an industry standard for VOC emissions and does not make any warranty (express or implied), guarantee, or representation about the level of health protection provided by compliance with SCS-EC-10-2004 and California Section 01350, including whether such compliance will prevent or eliminate any potential adverse health effects from VOC emissions.

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