

Armstrong/Bruce Laminate FAQs

Q: What is CARB and how does it certify flooring?

CARB is the California Air Resources Board which sets emission standards for consumer products manufactured and/or sold in California, but it does not certify flooring. CARB requires companies like Armstrong to get composite wood products certified by CARB-approved Third Party Certifiers (TPC), and we do. Our suppliers have their products tested at independent, CARB-certified TPCs, and then they provide those results to us on a regular basis. We only accept products that are certified to meet CARB requirements.

Q. What steps has Armstrong taken to ensure that all of its flooring is safe?

While none of the potentially noncomplaint laminate product identified was Armstrong or Bruce product, given recent issues impacting the industry, we proactively expanded our already comprehensive testing program – including raw core and deconstructive testing at independent labs – to ensure Armstrong products meet or exceed all applicable industry standards. In addition, Armstrong employees conducted site visits and audits of our suppliers, including core suppliers, to ensure they meet our rigorous quality standards. These additional steps have confirmed that all Armstrong and Bruce branded products remain safe and reliable, adhering to U.S. federal government and, where applicable, state regulations, at all times. As always, Armstrong is committed to providing safe, high-quality products.

Q: Armstrong states, “Facilities manufacturing products for Armstrong purchase their MDF and are regulated as fabricators under the CARB regulation.” In what manner are they regulated and by whom? Do they self-certify, or is there an active process performed by the CARB?

Manufacturers under the CARB regulation are those that manufacture the core, and Fabricators are those that take the core and make it a finished product; different CARB regulations apply to each. Because we label the products as Bruce or Armstrong, we take on the liability under the regulation of our supplier. We have supply agreements in place requiring our suppliers to follow the CARB regulations. Ultimately, it is our responsibility to make sure we use compliant cores, have certificates, and label the product properly. We have sourcing managers on the ground in China and product stewardship personnel in Lancaster who ensure product compliance and regularly monitor that testing and certifications are up to date.

Q: Armstrong states that MDF suppliers “are certified by a Third Party Certifier”. Who is the Third Party Certifier?

For both our Bruce and Armstrong branded laminate products, our suppliers use the following Third Party Certifiers:

SCS = Scientific Certification Systems
SGS = Société Générale de Surveillance
Holz Forschung Austria

Each core supplier uses a CARB-certified lab of their choice to test their cores. CARB certifies many labs throughout the world, and the core manufacturers send their products to a CARB-certified lab for independent, third-party testing and certification. The third party certifying labs can be found at the following link: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/toxics/compwood/listoftpcs.htm> The certifying labs used can vary by product given the variety of cores used to support our product range. Armstrong has certificates from our suppliers that list the testing Lab for a particular product and, as stated above, monitor these on a regular basis for compliance.

Q: Where is Armstrong’s laminate flooring made? What percentage of Armstrong’s laminate flooring is made in China?

79% in China, 21% in Europe. Regardless of where our flooring is made, Armstrong product specifications require adherence to all environmental, health and safety requirements, including formaldehyde emissions of the U.S. federal government and, where applicable, state regulations such as the California Air Resources Board (CARB II); CALGreen, CA Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 11, 2012; and Collaborative for High-Performance Schools (CHPS), National Core Criteria, 2014.

Q: I remain concerned about the fact that the flooring I purchased was made in China and may have unacceptably high levels of formaldehyde. Is there anything to be concerned about with Armstrong flooring products made in China?

We take this issue very seriously. At Armstrong, the safety of our customers and employees informs everything we do. Given recent issues impacting the industry, we proactively expanded our already comprehensive testing program – including raw core and deconstructive testing at independent labs – to ensure Armstrong products meet or exceed all applicable industry standards.

The expanded testing confirmed that all Armstrong and Bruce branded products remain safe and reliable, adhering to U.S. federal government and, where applicable, state regulations, at all times.

Our product specifications require adherence to all environmental, health and safety requirements, including formaldehyde emissions, of the U.S. federal government and, where applicable, state regulations such as the California Air Resources Board (CARB II); CALGreen, CA Code of Regulations Title 24, Part 11, 2012; and Collaborative for High-Performance Schools (CHPS), National Core Criteria, 2014. Our suppliers have their products tested at independent certified labs and then provide the test results to us on a regular basis. We only accept products that are certified to meet CARB requirements. In addition, on an annual basis, we randomly test our products at the Hardwood Products Veneer Association (HPVA) lab in Virginia for OSHA requirements.

While none of the potentially noncomplaint laminate product identified earlier this year was Armstrong or Bruce product, given recent issues impacting the industry, we expanded our already comprehensive testing program – including raw core and core deconstruction tests at independent labs – to ensure Armstrong products meet or exceed all applicable industry standards. In addition, Armstrong employees conducted site visits and audits of our suppliers, including core suppliers, to ensure they meet our rigorous quality standards.

Q: Who should I contact at Armstrong if I have additional questions?

All questions should be directed to: 1-877-Armstrong or fpotechline@armstrong.com.