

# STRATA MAX™

HI-PERFORMANCE SHEET FLOORING

## **Frequently asked Questions about StrataMax installation**

**Q:** What do I do where the drywall is up off the subfloor?

**A:** Continue to fit the StrataMax 3/16" short of the vertical plane of the drywall, just as though it extended to the floor. Apply caulk to the edge of the StrataMax.

**Q:** Do I still need to caulk if the edges will be covered with trim molding or wall base?

**A:** Yes, we recommend caulk at all edges even if they will be covered.

**Q:** What should I do if the floor has a drain?

**A:** Rooms with floor drains will also have a sloping surface to channel water to the drain. Because of the slope and because of possible moisture issues, rooms like this can be full spread with S-288.

**Q:** Will small irregularities or distortions in the StrataMax sheet go away in a few days?

**A:** You should not leave the job, thinking that fullness or buckles will correct themselves as with Interflex products. Fix it right away or fully adhere it. StrataMax has the ability to accommodate normal subfloor movement and temperature changes. If that accommodation property is used up in correcting installation issues, it may not be able to perform well with the seasonal changes.

**Q:** Since StrataMax is a really tough product and difficult to tear, can I take shortcuts in handling and acclimation?

**A:** No, particularly if you want to loose lay it. Storing and transporting rolled face out on cores, and proper conditioning of both the room and the product are very important to any installation, particularly with modified loose lay installations.

**Q:** Other than the seam, where are some of the other critical areas that could be taped?

**A:** At tubs and showers; doorways where trim cannot cover an exposed edge; where heavy rolling appliances are common such as dishwashers or microwave carts. Do not perimeter bond with tape.

**Q:** What about an “X” of tape under the refrigerator?

**A:** Yes that’s OK, BUT, it is not a substitute for using strips of hardboard (or similar) when moving or repositioning heavy appliances like refrigerators, washers, dryers, etc.

**Q:** Any other tips about rolling loads?

**A:** The fact that we allow for installation directly over subflooring may mean the vinyl will be going in earlier in the builder schedule. Other trades have to be more aware of the loose lay installation. Board protection will be needed when moving kitchen cabinets, water heaters, furnaces, etc.

**Q:** What should I do at carpet moldings and thresholds?

**A:** Where possible, use transition molding similar to “T” molding that allows the StrataMax to slide underneath without being pinched. For existing door thresholds or carpet trim you may be able to raise it up slightly and get the edge hidden underneath. BUT, be careful not to butt up against the fasteners or have fasteners go through the StrataMax. Some sliding door tracks and stair nosing may be difficult, so you will have to leave a minimum gap and use a neat bead of caulk. **The main point is not to introduce fullness to the StrataMax at these transition points.** Use some of the double-faced tape, if necessary, to insure no fullness will be pushed back into the sheet.

**Q:** Can I put cabinets on top of StrataMax and am I limited in the number of seams over wood subfloors?

**A:** Unlike “glass” structures, StrataMax **can** have cabinets placed on top and multiple seams are OK over wood subfloors. As noted above, proper conditioning, and not creating fullness between seams or when placing cabinets is **IMPORTANT**.

**Q:** What is the recommendation for installing the perimeter trim?

**A:** Leave a very slight clearance so it isn’t pinched against the subfloor, and nail or adhere the trim to the wall surface, not to the floor.

**Q:** When going over existing vinyl, when do I need to use embossing leveler (i.e. how much embossing can the existing floor have)?

**A:** Our recommendation is to use embossing leveler when fully adhering. With modified loose lay, typical embossing on rotogravure floors (less than 3/16” wide and less than 1/32” deep) would not show through and would certainly not cause performance problems. Deeper



embossing; i.e. on the inlaid Designer Solarian floors, some residential tile floors, and ceramic tile grout joints, should be leveled even for the loose lay method.

**Q:** What do I do if I see improper OSB installation; i.e. joints are too far apart or panels are not staggered?

**A:** Additional underlayment board is recommended or you may contact the builder/subcontractor to discuss options for fixing the issue. If you choose not to repair the issue and the OSB is not installed to specification, or if it has been damaged or weathered significantly, we recommend covering it.

**Q:** Can I straight edge and butt the seams?

**A:** No, seams should be double-cut. Seams of StrataMax should not be stretched or compressed to obtain pattern match as it will create buckles in the flooring adjacent to seams.

**Q:** Can I use the S-288 adhesive in place of the double-faced tape at the seam?

**A:** Yes, at the installer's discretion, a 4" to 6" band of S-288 can be used in place of the tape underneath seams or in front of tub and shower enclosures, etc.

**Q:** I sometimes see narrow lines of flattened embossing running across the sheet. Sometimes they appear glossier than the surrounding area. What is the cause and can I correct it?

**A:** Heavy rolls of flooring can develop flat spots depending on storage techniques and the type of pattern and embossing texture. For example, when rolls are stacked in pyramid fashion for an extended period of time, the bottom rolls may show a line of flattened texture running across the sheet. On a full roll, there may be 2 or 3 such lines on the outer laps of product, spaced about 36" apart. Generally these lines will fade after a few days as the embossing recovers. A hot air gun can be used to warm the product to approximately 140° F. and the lines will improve almost instantly.

**Q:** Can I install StrataMax over multiple layers of existing vinyl flooring?

**A:** We do not recommend going over more than one layer of existing vinyl flooring. However, we are aware of some instances in property management applications where that is desirable. Increased indentation is the primary risk associated with this practice, particularly where heavy traffic, chairs with casters, and heavy appliances and furniture are present. The risk of indent needs to be understood by all parties before hand and in some instances the installer and owner may decide to assume the risk if the possibility for indent-related issues is low. However, indent claims over multiple layers of existing vinyl will not be covered under the warranty.