



Evoked Luxury Vinyl Flooring

Doing Better: Indoor Air Quality Testing, Transparency & Compliance

Thank you for your interest in the indoor air quality standards for Evoke Luxury Vinyl Flooring.

We take the health of our customers and our responsibility to the greater environment seriously. Most companies seem to think “compliance” or “being green” is just using the right label or creating a fancy logo, but it’s not. It’s creating an entire program and an integrated system that is constantly improving and expanding.

We want everyone to do better. We are active participants in our industry associations, and work with those associations in developing best practices and responding to regulatory demands. Our compliance officer has worked with government agencies for improved industry oversight and has taught companies around the world.

Quality is paramount at Metropolitan. We dictate high technical standards for every one of our products and monitor production through our strict quality control program. Our compliance program includes uncompromising standards for indoor air quality (IAQ) and making manufacturing decisions based on the environmental concerns of today’s consumer. We conduct regular third-party testing and employ a full-time Environmental Compliance Officer (ECO) to monitor our QC program and triple-check their work. Why? Because it matters, and we strive to do the right thing and stand behind our work.

Vinyl Flooring cannot be CARB certified

CARB is probably the best-known formaldehyde emissions regulation and as a result, we are sometimes asked if our vinyl floors are CARB Certified. The CARB standard is for composite wood products only and therefore cannot be applied to vinyl flooring. That said, not only is there is no formaldehyde utilized in the production of Metropolitan’s vinyl flooring, any possible emissions for formaldehyde would be a fraction of what CARB would permit from wood.

CA Section 01350 Compliant

CARB may be the most famous program, but it only regulates the emissions of one VOC (formaldehyde) from one material (wood). We needed a program that tested for more VOCs and could review other material types as well. We began testing all Evoke floors against California Section 01350, which was designed for evaluating emissions from vinyl floors.

CA Section 01350 sets “health-based exposure limits to all volatile organic chemicals” that are defined as “chemicals of concern.” The rule specifies limits on:

Chemicals of concern include known or probable human carcinogens, reproductive/ developmental toxins, and systemic toxins with noncancer chronic effects contained in the latest published editions of the following lists:



Cal/EPA OEHHA list of chemicals for which non-cancer Chronic Reference Exposure Levels (CRELs). CRELs are inhalation concentrations to which the general population, including sensitive individuals, may be exposed for long periods (10 years or more) without the likelihood of serious adverse systemic effects (excluding cancer). CREL values are continuously updated by OEHHA (see <https://oehha.ca.gov/air/general-info/oehha-acute-8-hour-and-chronic-reference-exposure-level-rel-summary>).

Cal/EPA OEHHA Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (Proposition 65) lists of known or probable human carcinogens and reproductive/developmental toxins. These lists are accessible at http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/prop65_list/newlist.html.

Cal/EPA ARB list of Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs). The TAC list includes all substances on the EPA list of Hazardous Air Pollutants plus additional compounds. This list is accessible at <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/carb-identified-toxic-air-contaminants>.

The rule notes that *“multiple sources of individual VOCs are often present in a building. To ensure indoor air concentrations are within allowable limits, each individual product category is capped at no more than one-half of the CREL for each chemical in a building type.”*

CA 01350 is recognized by LEED as a qualifying attribute within the low-emitting materials credit category. Compliance further meets:

- Collaborative for High Performance Schools (CHPS) Reference Specifications for Energy and Resource Efficiency, Section 01350 Special Environmental Requirements.
- Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims.
- ISO 14024 Environmental Labels and Declarations: Environmental Labeling Type I, Guiding Principles and Procedures.
- ISO 14021 Environmental Labels and Declarations: Environmental Claims, Terms and Definitions (Type II).

We knew we could do better. Enter GREENGUARD Gold.

CA 01350 is good, but we knew could do better. At the end of 2018, we made a commitment to go further still and undertook to have our products certified under the GREENGUARD program, managed by Underwriters Laboratories (UL), one of the largest and most respected product safety organizations in the world.

GREENGUARD Gold certification **includes CA 01350 compliance**, and **in addition** establishes an extremely low Total VOC level, and sets emissions for specific VOCs at 1/100th of the U.S. Federal Government’s Threshold Limit Value (TLV) for occupational exposure. It further limits the total emission quantity from the “aldehyde” grouping of VOCs. The GREENGUARD Gold standard also has stricter testing protocols than CA 01350 and it is the strictest emissions certification we could find.



According to the UL, GREENGUARD Gold certification is, “designed to define low-emitting materials suitable for environments where people, particularly children and sensitive adults, spend extended periods of time, in particular schools and healthcare facilities.”

Information on UL’s GREENGUARD program can be found here: <https://www.ul.com/resources/ul-greenguard-certification-program> and a listing of all certified products at: <https://spot.ul.com/>. Certified products are identified on the website.

Phthalate Free Inputs

Media reports have led to some confusion and concern regarding the use of phthalates in the production of vinyl flooring products. Phthalates are a class of chemical plasticizers that are used to make vinyl more flexible.

All Evoke Luxury Vinyl is produced as PFI, which means “Phthalate Free Inputs.” This is an environmental trade-off: the use of recycled content keeps old material out of landfills but in turn restricts production control. However, given the concerns of the possible presence of phthalates or heavy metals in some recycled materials, we decided to utilize only virgin content in our manufacturing process.

A note on our finishes: they do NOT contain antibacterial/antimicrobial additives.

We have chosen not to follow the industry trend of adding antibacterial or antimicrobial material into our finishes. We feel there is insufficient science regarding both the long-term health risks and the actual effectiveness. Further, many of these additives are utilized as “nano-particles,” a type of material which has not been well studied and is almost completely unregulated.

Many medical professionals and government agencies have expressed a concern about developing “super bugs,” resistant to available surface treatments. If the finish “kills 99% of bacteria,” that remaining 1% is likely to dominate in the future. Since regular cleaning is equally or more effective than adding a pesticide to the surface of the floor, we choose not to help inoculate bacteria and other microbes.

For more information, we recommend reviewing these quick ten takeaways https://prod-hml.s3.amazonaws.com/resources/Antimicrobial_WhitePaper_10Takeaways.pdf or for more details: <https://healthybuilding.net/blog/547-do-antimicrobial-building-products-protect-against-covid-19>, and <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/antimicrobial-resistance>,

We don’t want to profit on the fear created by COVID. Regular cleaning, rather than untested additives, remains your best defense.

Additional Environmental Features

Our hefty wear layers and tough top coatings combined with our easy maintenance and recoat systems make these lifetime floors; and nothing is “greener” than extending the lifecycle of any product. In fact, some of our vinyl can be reused simply by removing and reinstalling. (This is especially easy when originally installed using a



releasable adhesive or the modified loose lay method.) The reuse or salvaging of materials is environmentally responsible and eliminates the energy and resources that are required to recycle or dispose of the product.

Look for additional attribute on many items, the UL NSF/ANSI 332 Silver Certification. This standard is recognized by LEED and other green building programs as providing a path to more sustainable vinyl flooring through environmental impact and performance requirements. The certification covers a wide range of concerns:

- Product design (encourages manufacturers to integrate environmental and life-cycle thinking into the product's design process)
- Product manufacturing processes (encourages manufacturers to quantify the environmental impacts from their manufacturing, and then act to reduce or remove those impacts)
- Long-term value (encouraging manufacturers to maximize product longevity)
- End-of-life management (encouraging existing and new resilient flooring products to be collected, processed, recycled, and/or composted within the existing material's recycling infrastructure)
- Corporate governance (encouraging corporate social responsibility in the form of providing a desirable workplace, being involved in the local community, and demonstrating financial health)
- Innovation (giving manufacturers the opportunity to be awarded points for exceptional performance)

Green Building Program Recognition

Green Building programs recognize GREENGUARD Gold and NSF 332 certification as desirable attributes. Therefore, as well as meeting the requirements of a variety of LEED versions, systems and categories, Evoke's Luxury Vinyl may contribute within numerous programs including, but not limited to:

- International Green Construction Code (multiple versions/ratings)
- BREEAM UK (multiple versions/ratings)
- CALGreen Code Nonresidential and Residential
- Fitwel Commercial Interior, Multifamily Residential and multiple other versions and categories
- Green Globes (multiple versions/ratings)
- GSAS - Global Sustainability Assessment System (multiple versions/ratings)
- Living Building Challenge 4.0 Imperative 10
- NAHB Green Building Standard (multiple versions/ratings)
- US EPA Indoor airPlus
- US EPA Recommendations for Federal Purchasing Flooring - Tile, Resilient, and Other Non-Carpet
- WELL (multiple versions/ratings)

Doing Better

We hope this information has been helpful and thank you for considering Evoke Luxury Vinyl Flooring for your project. Please contact your dealer or visit our Evoke website for more information. Please contact your dealer or visit [Clean Floors](#).