

EVOKE RIGID CORE VINYL FLOOR

Supporting Good Indoor Air Quality and Better Behavior

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

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.

EVOKE®
flooring that can take it

Rigid Core cannot be CARB certified

CARB is probably the best known formaldehyde emissions regulation and as a result, we are sometimes asked if our rigid core vinyl floor is CARB Certified. The CARB standard is for composite wood products only and therefore cannot be applied to rigid core flooring. "Rigid core" is a generic term encompassing a variety of cores including the SPC and WPC variations and it is not regulated by CARB or the other formaldehyde emission regulations. That said, not only is there is no formaldehyde utilized in the production of Metropolitan's rigid core 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 http://www.oehha.ca.gov/air/chronic_rels/AllChrels.html).

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 <http://www.arb.ca.gov/toxics/id/taclist.htm>

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. All of our rigid core flooring has been GREENGUARD Gold certified.

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 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/>.

Phthalate Free Inputs

Recent 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 vinyl floors are 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.

Doing Better

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. It’s not. It’s creating an entire program and 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.

We hope this information has been helpful and thank you for considering Evoke Rigid Core Vinyl Flooring for your home. Please contact your dealer or visit our Evoke website for more information. More information on our Clean Floors commitment is available at: www.cleanfloorsbymetro.com.