



# THE COMMERCIAL FLOORING REPORT

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## POISON PLASTIC FLOORING



Do I have your attention? One of the things that bother me most is ignorance; I can deal with stupidity as you can educate people. Ignorance and those who espouse it as truth, has a tendency to sensationalize issues that when looked at logically don't make sense. Logic is the science that investigates the principles governing correct or reliable inference. Often logic and common sense, get lost in sensationalism that would have the unsuspecting believing all statements about whatever are true. It's a reach to make a correlation between the admitted potential harmful effects of plastic nipples and baby bottles on babies to incorporate the entire populace of the world to what some would have you believe are poisonous plastics.

Plastic flooring is not poisonous. As far as I know, after nearly 43 years in the industry, no one who works making, selling or installing vinyl flooring has ever died from being exposed to it which would include me. For that matter, plumbers, auto assembly workers and anyone in nearly any industry would be dropping like flies as plastics are used in nearly everything. Do you recall the 1967 movie "The Graduate" where Dustin Hoffman is told one word to remember for his success, "plastics." Well, plastic permeates our lives. We drink water through it and out of it; we sit with it daily commuting in all our means of transportation, we are constantly exposed to plastic in every facet of our lives. Without plastics we'd be living in the Stone Age. (I've sensationalized with this comment). We've included the following chart as a reference and guide to the variety of plastics; their uses, status, and recyclability.

Household	
Plastics	
<p>■ In your quest to go green, use this guide to use and sort plastic. The number, usually found with a triangle symbol on a container, indicates the type of resin used to produce the plastic. Call <b>1-800-CLEANUP</b> for recycling information in your state.</p>	
 PETE	<p><b>Number 1 • PETE or PET (polyethylene terephthalate)</b>  <b>IS USED IN</b> . . . . . microwavable food trays; salad dressing, soft drink, water, and beer bottles  <b>STATUS</b> . . . . . hard to clean; absorbs bacteria and flavors; avoid reusing  <b>IS RECYCLED TO MAKE</b> . . carpet, furniture, new containers, Polar fleece</p>
 HDPE	<p><b>Number 2 • HDPE (high-density polyethylene)</b>  <b>IS USED IN</b> . . . . . household cleaner and shampoo bottles, milk jugs, yogurt tubs  <b>STATUS</b> . . . . . transmits no known chemicals into food  <b>IS RECYCLED TO MAKE</b> . . detergent bottles, fencing, floor tiles, pens</p>
 V	<p><b>Number 3 • V or PVC (vinyl)</b>  <b>IS USED IN</b> . . . . . cooking oil bottles, clear food packaging, mouthwash bottles  <b>STATUS</b> . . . . . is believed to contain phalates that interfere with hormonal development; avoid  <b>IS RECYCLED TO MAKE</b> . . cables, mudflaps, paneling, roadway gutters</p>
 LDPE	<p><b>Number 4 • LDPE (low-density polyethylene)</b>  <b>IS USED IN</b> . . . . . bread and shopping bags, carpet, clothing, furniture  <b>STATUS</b> . . . . . transmits no known chemicals into food  <b>IS RECYCLED TO MAKE</b> . . envelopes, floor tiles, lumber, trash-can liners</p>
 PP	<p><b>Number 5 • PP (polypropylene)</b>  <b>IS USED IN</b> . . . . . ketchup bottles, medicine and syrup bottles, drinking straws  <b>STATUS</b> . . . . . transmits no known chemicals into food  <b>IS RECYCLED TO MAKE</b> . . battery cables, brooms, ice scrapers, rakes</p>
 PS	<p><b>Number 6 • PS (polystyrene)</b>  <b>IS USED IN</b> . . . . . disposable cups and plates, egg cartons, take-out containers  <b>STATUS</b> . . . . . is believed to leach styrene, a possible human carcinogen, into food; avoid  <b>IS RECYCLED TO MAKE</b> . . foam packaging, insulation, light switchplates, rulers</p>
 OTHER	<p><b>Number 7 • Other (miscellaneous)</b>  <b>IS USED IN</b> . . . . . 3- and 5-gallon water jugs, nylon, some food containers  <b>STATUS</b> . . . . . contains bisphenol A, which has been linked to heart disease and obesity; avoid  <b>IS RECYCLED TO MAKE</b> . . custom-made products</p>

This statement from a publication we researched would have you believe we should be alarmed at the audacity to use plastic. It states, "What's even more shocking is that these vinyl building materials aren't just in our homes, but they're widespread in our nation's schools, from the flooring and carpeting to playground equipment." And, as I just mentioned, plastic or vinyl, whether in building material or your car seats is everywhere. Our lives would not be the same without it. The people who would alarm you about vinyl flooring or building materials got up this morning and drank water that runs through plastic pipes, they may have stopped for coffee that was brewed or contained in a form of plastic, they rode in transportation that contains plastic, walked on vinyl flooring, carried plastic or vinyl in their pocket or purse and came in contact with it everywhere. Ludicrous to think plastic flooring is poisonous and a detriment to your health.

There is basically zero chance of vinyl flooring having any deleterious effects on the health of those walking on it. Yes it is used in schools, hospitals, office buildings, public space and anywhere there is flooring and it is not a hazard to your health. It is not poisonous and you don't have to be paranoid or concerned that your health is in jeopardy because you're walking on it. If anyone is that concerned they should leave earth now. Oh, wait, you'd have to travel in transportation that contains plastic. By the way, the phone and case that is plastered to your ear and hands, has plastic. See, you can't get away from this stuff on or off the planet and yet humanity is not dying off because of it.



Another statement made in researched material is this, "The good news is there are plenty of safer cost competitive alternatives. The researchers found that linoleum, cork, bamboo and hardwood flooring all tested free of lead, cadmium, mercury and other hazardous metals." Though these are all good flooring materials they are not going to take the place of vinyl flooring or even PVC free flooring. Wood certainly isn't going to replace vinyl flooring in schools and hospitals. Wood is an impractical replacement in heavy commercial use environments for the most part by the very nature of its inherent characteristics to dent, scratch, expand and contract. Wood is also not capable of withstanding the kinds of intense cleaning methods and chemicals necessary in hospitals and schools. Those who favor green alternatives would have you believe that any flooring material that is "natural" is better and that just isn't true. Every flooring material has its place and not every flooring material is a candidate for use everywhere. Vinyl flooring on the other hand, being as safe as it is, can also be made to look like any flooring material; wood, stone, cork, bamboo, even metal. It can be shaped

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like any flooring material and can be used in almost any application and use area, commercially and residentially. Vinyl flooring material can be morphed into any form. In fact, one of the hottest flooring materials on the market is LVT - Luxury **VINYL** Tile. That's vinyl as in plastic. This product is selling like hot cakes.

Vinyl flooring materials can also be installed without the use of out of the bucket adhesives so they won't be affected by moisture or alkalinity. The EnviroSTIX installation system has been successfully used now for several years to thwart the installation compromising effects of moisture and alkalinity on hard surface flooring giving vinyl flooring, and hard backed flooring materials, even more performance attributes. Add to this the environmental friendly aspect of not having to be concerned with adhesive buckets, the concerns with not getting the right adhesive down, using the right trowel, too much or too little open time and you've increased the value of vinyl flooring and the integrity of its installation exponentially.



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The concerns of those who tell you that vinyl or plastic flooring or building materials would have on the health or well-being of the world's citizens are exaggerations. The naysayer's existence is as much affected by plastic building materials as any of us. We all use and are exposed to plastic every day and yet we continue to live despite it.

The use of vinyl flooring in the commercial market continues to increase because of its record of safe and effective performance and now, even more so, because it has become a flooring material that allows so much freedom in design. As stated previously, vinyl flooring is being made to look like any other flooring material and even metal. The versatility of vinyl flooring material makes it one the most effective floorings available. Nature deals us far more health compromising conditions with just allergens alone from flora than vinyl building materials and certainly vinyl flooring.

Well, I'm going to get into my car, which has plastic materials and head over to the grocery store, which has sheet vinyl flooring and buy some products in plastic containers so I can make dinner tonight. If I'm **not** stricken by all of the plastic materials I'm going to encounter I'll be able to write the next issue.



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