

THE COMMERCIAL FLOORING REPORT

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AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

In every flooring transaction and project every individual be it the manufacturer, sales person, architect, designer, specifier, flooring contractor or installer and anyone in between who impacts the project, has a responsibility.

Thousands of flooring problems, failures and claims occur every year because one or more of the parties involved in a transaction has failed to accept responsibility for some procedural function.

Gaining a clear understanding of what can reasonably be expected of others in a transaction and what others can expect of you will make business easier and reduce the number of costly flooring failures. A catastrophic flooring failure, or even a partial one, means business stops where the flooring is installed because replacement can't be undertaken in a functioning space. Even a parceled out replacement disrupts business enough that failures should be avoided at all costs. In an effort to get a project completed the thought of a failure is often lost in the fervor but let one occur and the finger pointing comes in earnest. If everyone keeps this in mind maybe you can avoid the risks of having to punish yourselves later when an "I told you so" doesn't come back to plague you.



These "areas of responsibility" have been compiled as guidelines that, if accepted, would benefit both the end user and the flooring industry. These guidelines pertain to all parties involved in a variety of transactions and the subsequent installation of the products. Utilization of these practices can help put all parties on an equal footing by understanding who is supposed to do what; it can assure the parties that all requirements and conditions of a transaction will be met; it can reduce claims caused by misunderstanding or lack of information or an unwillingness for one of the parties to accept its rightful responsibility; and, most importantly, it can save valuable time, expense and frustration.

Responsibilities of sales representatives have not been itemized separately because their responsibility is to act as outlined for that segment of the industry they represent. I've also included the architect and designer as well because they have a significant influence on what flooring products get used where and how.

The areas of responsibility pertain to all types of flooring products:

MANUFACTURER:

1. Provide purchasing party with complete product information to allow for the proper selection of specifications and the appropriate uses of flooring manufactured to include:

- a) Yarn specifications
- b) Traffic classification information
- c) Specific uncoded style information or specifications
- d) Uncoded dye lot sizes and roll sequence information
- e) Complete carpet cushion specifications require for use with each traffic classification as specified in CRI 104 standard for installation of textile floorcovering materials
- f) Complete mill pattern tolerance information and pattern match policy
- g) Backing material or the density of any attached cushion
- h) Complete information regarding mill applied soil, static, or antimicrobial treatments
- i) Complete warranty information
- j) Carpet use and maintenance information to include information on certain household products that can cause permanent damage which is not the responsibility of the manufacturer
- k) Product finishes
- l) Dye lots
- m) Product specifications
- n) Installation instructions
- o) Technical services
- p) Job start up assistance
- q) Compliance of product for installation site and performance

2. Provide roll tags with each roll or cut order for carpet or similar information for hard surface flooring to include the following:

- roll number - •uncoded dye lot number - •style number - •color - •size - •pattern repeats - •set or drop match and number of inches of pattern repeat - •backing material or density of attached cushion - •mill applied soil, static or antimicrobial treatments



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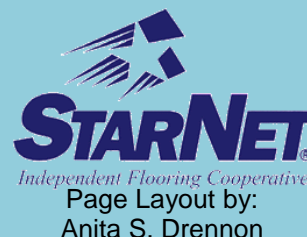
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2. Provide purchasing party with complete claims policy and procedure information
3. Acknowledge receipt of claims form and provide information on claims status within 14 working days
4. Assume responsibility for manufacturer's warranty and product defects
5. Provide accurate delivery information
6. Determine that flooring shipped is identical to that which has been ordered
7. Prior to shipment inspect flooring for visible defects

SPECIFIER, ARCHITECT and DESIGNER:

1. Consult with manufacturer to determine proper flooring material for each installation.
2. Specify and confirm the proper, color, style, construction, performance characteristics, cushion, adhesives, floor prep, components and ancillary needs for each installation.
3. Consult industry guidelines and those of manufacturer for the use, installation, care and maintenance of each flooring product.
4. Specify the correct installation system for each job based on manufacturer's specifications.
5. Be responsible for the correct flooring material, color, style, quantity, and components as ordered.
6. Insure that the selected product is appropriate for use and will deliver the performance and appearance retention expectations.
7. Get approvals for the products specified or selected from the end user and sign offs
8. Look at selections, especially carpet, in the light and settings where it will be used to insure the color appears as expected. Lighting has a significant effect on carpet color.

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- Product Sample Evaluation
- Identifying Substrate, Concrete And Moisture Issues
 - Certified Product Testing
- Dispute Resolution, Litigation Assistance and Proffered Expert Witness
- Insurance Loss Evaluations

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9. Specify carpet color to match under the type of lighting it will be used in so manufacturer can match the color selected
10. Specify appropriate substrate conditions, testing, compliance and verification of substrate conditions necessary to accept product installation
11. Double check everything

DEALER OR FLOORING CONTRACTOR:

1. Disseminate complete product information to end users and installers as provided by manufacturers and distributors. Information should allow for proper selection and the appropriate use of carpet sold to include:
2. Be able to identify flooring sold as to the following information:
 - a) roll number
 - b) uncoded dye lot number
 - c) style number and information
 - d) specifications
 - e) color
 - f) size
 - g) set or drop match and number of inches of pattern repeat
 - h) backing material or density of attached cushion for carpet
 - i) mill applied soil, static or antimicrobial for carpet
 - j) how and where the product can and should be used
 - k) components that can be used with the product e.g. underlayments, adhesives, floor preps, etc.
 - l) warranty information on the product
 - m) traffic classifications of the product
3. Order specific dye lot specifications on large order
4. Provide installers with complete manufacturer's installation instruction, to include shop drawings diagramming the location of all panels, seams, edge moldings and other pertinent information
5. Provide end user and installer with complete dealer claim policy and procedure
6. Inspect incoming shipments for carrier related damage and claims
7. Determine that flooring material received is identical to that which was ordered
8. Store flooring material properly and according to manufacturer's guidelines
9. Evaluate shelf life and rotate inventory so as to avoid roll crush
10. Prior to shipment inspect carpet or sheet good materials for visible defects
11. Provide carpet cushion that is adequate for the traffic classification to which the installation will be subjected as specified in CRI 104 standard for installation of textile floor covering material
12. Ensure that installers adhere to installation procedure as specified by the manufacturer and industry guidelines. Manufacturer's installation guidelines supersede those of the industry. For unique situations get manufacturers approval or instructions for installation in writing
13. Assume responsibility for any portion of consumer warranty that exceeds manufacturer warranty
14. Acknowledge and respond to complaints within 15 working days of notification
15. Insure installation site is compliant with manufacturers and industry guidelines
16. Substrate testing has been conducted by the appropriate independent parties so that any moisture related compromising substrate conditions are addressed prior to installation

INSTALLER:

1. Inspect all markings on product packaging wrappers, roll tickets, roll insert papers and carpet for information and verification regarding the following:
 - a) dye lot number
 - b) dye lot sequence
 - c) style, name, number and correct product matching job
 - d) color
 - e) size
 - f) pattern
 - g) backing material for carpet
 - h) special installation instructions and other data necessary for completing a satisfactory installation
 - i) in conjunction with flooring contractor insure the product being installed is compliant with that specified before beginning installation
2. Inspect carpet for visual defects before installing. If end user insist that visually defective carpet be installed, secure in writing the end user's acceptance of the carpet. Bring any concerns, issues or questions to flooring contractor immediately
3. Install flooring materials according to manufacturer's written instructions and job specifications.
4. Adhere to the shop drawing diagramming the layout, location of all carpet panels, seams edge moldings and other pertinent installation details as approved by the architect or specifying party
5. Guarantee the workmanship of installation for all flooring products
6. Be responsible for all installation warranties provided by installation company.

These areas of responsibility are more specific to the parties involved. We can't forget the responsibility of the General Contractor relative to the job site conditions, compliance to manufacturers and flooring industry guidelines and for providing a space ready to receive the flooring materials so the flooring contractor and the installers can work under the best conditions. Unfortunately flooring gets installed last on a project and very often under less than ideal conditions and in time frames shortened due to completion deadlines.

Certainly much more detailing of those involved in the flooring process can be added but these areas of responsibility will at least put something in writing that all parties can use as a guideline. Specifications written by the Architect, specifier or consultant can sharpen up the areas of responsibility and guidelines. The objective is to get the best product possible in place, correctly installed, on a non-compromising substrate and environment the first time to avoid the costly failures we get called in to evaluate most often caused by someone not being responsible.

If you need our help, before or after a flooring project, contact us; we have the answers.