

Protecting Our Environment

How Green Is Your Fine Flooring?

(NAPSA)—If you want a beautiful floor that's also green, think laminate.

A recent study considered the ecological and economic factors in making, using and recycling or disposing of the most popular and attractive flooring choices: wood, carpeting, PVC, marble, ceramic and laminate. The study assessed the ecological effect of these flooring choices to determine how laminate flooring measures on the green scale.

Four areas were considered:

Energy Balance

Eco-efficiency is the total energy consumed in the production, installation, cleaning, heating and disposal. Laminate flooring and carpeting tied as requiring the least energy over their lifetimes.

Greenhouse Gas Emission Potential

This assesses CO₂ emissions associated with the floor through its useful life cycle. All products ranked the same.

Recycling Effectiveness

This tracks the energy needed to recycle a product. Laminate flooring topped the list thanks to its low emission levels in production and reusability, as well as the low generation of waste in production and installation.

Consumption of Resources

This considered the use of materials such as limestone, iron ore, phosphorus, potassium chloride, sulfur, salt, gas, oil and coal.

To the relief of many who appreciate a beautiful floor as well as a better world, laminate flooring and solid wood performed well given their use of renewable and



Beauty is as beauty does. Laminate floors are not just practical and beautiful to look at; they're also environmentally friendly.

sustainably managed wood floor materials.

Laminate flooring has an additional advantage: It's made almost entirely of materials that are not useful for other things and would otherwise be incinerated or used for landfill.

The study concluded that the advantages of laminate flooring will continue to grow. That means an environmentally friendly product that is also beautiful can be the choice of many homeowners for years to come.

Another important factor that's not so easy to measure is style. Some home decorating ideas, designers say, "ugly out"; that is, people tire of and replace them before they get a chance to wear out. Many believe that's where laminate flooring has the greatest advantage. Not only do its good looks improve with time, but it works well with just about any style or decor, from very traditional to ultramodern.

For more information, visit the Composite Panel Association at www.pbmdf.com.