

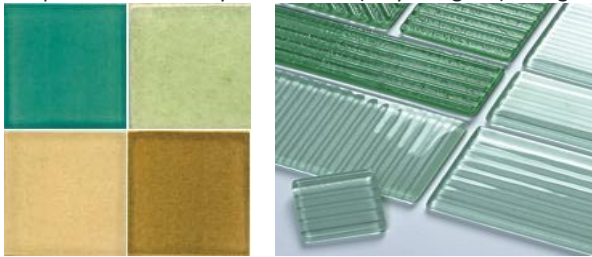
ECO FRIENDLY FLOORING - Once seen as a fringe movement, manufacturers have made “green” production a priority to meet the demands of today’s healthy living consumer.

By Michael Lee from Michael’s Wood Floors, Etc, LLC

“Green” is *hot* in design and an Eco-educated remodeler can offer an array of affordable, attractive, and durable flooring surfaces. The most important consideration when choosing a “green” flooring product is verification of the origin of the materials used to produce the product, i.e. whether or not the product is made from a rapidly sustainable resource or recycled materials. Environmental impacts of manufacturing and indoor air quality are important considerations as well.

CARPET: Today, many carpet manufacturers offer a variety of carpets made from recycled carpet or other recycled materials. Hands down our pick for favorite “green” carpeting is Mohawk’s everSTRAND™ series. Mohawk takes plastic bottles, chops and extrudes them into a soft luxurious yarn, that’s naturally stain resistant. It’s gratifying to know that one out of every four bottles recycled in North America becomes everSTRAND™ fiber. Note: before finalizing your carpet selection, to protect your indoor air quality, acquire the carpets VOC level (a measurement of off-gassing).

CERAMIC, PORCELAN & GLASS TILE: The materials used to produce tile are readily available and mined with fairly low environmental impact. Tile is inherently waterproof, low toxic, and a durable finish product. Our “green” tile picks were selected for both innovation and beauty, containing pre-consumer recycled waste (from manufacturing) on left, and postconsumer recycled content (recycled glass) on right.



Important Note: Thin-set mortars and adhesives used for tile installation, can have extremely high VOC levels, contributing to poor indoor air quality and are major components to smog. There are low or zero VOC products available. As with carpet, it’s important to discuss your air quality expectations with a reputable and knowledgeable flooring provider.



CORK: The new wave in kitchen flooring! Cork is universally recognized as a widely available and rapidly sustainable “green building” material. The outer bark of the Cork Oak Tree that flourishes in the Mediterranean is carefully stripped away without damage to the tree (it grows back). Because cork flooring is made from the pre-consumer waste of the wine industry it is especially green. Cork floors create a warm, comfortable, resilient surface that is gentle underfoot, it’s anti-microbial, will not spread flame, and is inherently resistant to molds, mildews, and common pests, it’s slip resistant and its natural elasticity allows it to spring back if dented. Providing low VOC levels and high quality construction our pick for best “green” cork is NaturalCork.

LINOLEUM: Natural linoleum is widely promoted and specified in the green building community. Natural linoleum is made primarily from linseed oil, pine resin, sawdust, cork dust, limestone and jute. It is an all-natural alternative to resilient flooring, including sheet vinyl and vinyl composition tile, which are made from polyvinyl chloride. It’s biodegradable and does not release harmful substances or gases; as it decomposes the raw materials return to nature. But don’t expect it to decompose anytime soon — Linoleum has a life expectancy of nearly 40 years. Proponents of natural linoleum say it does not require the same level of care as vinyl flooring products.

BAMBOO: Ideal wood substitute because bamboo is fast-growing, renewable, and rapidly sustainable. If mature material is harvested (older than 6 years) bamboo is harder than red oak, and as hard as maple. Bamboo contracts and expands 50% less than hardwoods. (note: less expensive manufacturers use young bamboo that is too soft and will dent). Bamboo has been a building material for thousands of years in China because of its strength, and dimensional stability. Aside from the green angle, bamboo has an aesthetic story. With advances in technology, manufacturers now provide a vast array of looks. To ensure bamboo floors appeal to American tastes, many companies now offer both, natural and stain colors, various board sizes, and textures.



Installation types include nail down, glue down or floated. Quality of bamboo can vary greatly, with bamboo more than any other finish you get what you pay for. The age of the bamboo and manufacturing standards will determine the suitability of the product for flooring.

WOOD: Sustainable forest management makes it possible to harvest wood without any serious impact on the environment, because trees are a renewable resource that can be replaced time and time again. The National Wood Flooring Association looks to The Forest Stewardship Council to certify wood flooring products as green when the material comes from forests operated under sustainable forest management practices.

To view samples of these products & more, call Michaels Wood Floors, Etc, LLC, @ 214. 533.0588 for an appointment, choose: in-home or our Old Town Coppell showroom