

CFR The Commercial Flooring Report

For the Commercial Floor Covering Industry

Volume 171 - December 2022

[Click here to View and Download all CFR Newsletters](#)

Misinformation Due to Lack of Product Knowledge

I'm writing this issue due to frustration and a bit of anger. I'm Sicilian and from New York, so, there's a tendency for me to not sugar coat anything.

My frustration and angst are due to inspection reports, furnished to us by both commercial and residential dealers, and from cases we work on, that are from independent inspectors that are so far from understanding what they're looking at, and reporting, that it makes you wonder where these people are getting their information. I feel bad for them due to their lack and depth of knowledge, but I also get angry when the reports are incorrect, and their determinations cause a dealer or installer to be wrongfully blamed for something they didn't do that is actually a product issue.

Manufacturers also believe this misinformation, and hold fast on what a flooring inspector, or their own field inspectors, report. However, as for manufacturers field inspectors, they are bound by what party line dictates. With LGM being based in Dalton, Georgia, "The Flooring Capital of the World" we are privy to product information by the very nature of being immersed in so much of it daily. It's incumbent upon us to make sure we stay up on the latest products and technology to properly serve our clients. Also, many of our associates once worked for manufacturers in a technical capacity, and we have the luxury of having extraordinarily intelligent team members in every category of flooring, concrete substrates, and associated products. We also know where and how to get honest answers. In addition, manufacturers often engage our services to help them resolve product issues. Further, we lab test a multitude of flooring products which provide invaluable information. And, most importantly, we work with flooring contractors, architects, general contractors, building owners and managers, construction attorneys, and other entities around the world that provide us with information on product trend problems that can't be refuted. The answer by a manufacturer to a commercial flooring contractor that, "you're the only one having this problem" doesn't work with us. We know better.

As for product knowledge, many of the hard surface products sold are produced outside of the US by hundreds of manufacturers, in all parts of the world, each having their own production equipment, facilities and testing labs – if they even have them, use them or know how to. They vary tremendously, and so the products they produce vary as well. When you're sourcing the product and not making it, even



Younger Lew—Belongs in an Episode of the Sopranos with His Cigar and All 🤔

with some oversight, the quality of the products can vary. Add to this the pre and post-consumer recycled content, how often the pre component is recycled into the product, the components used in the make up of the products, the chemicals, the production techniques, the stabilizing components, and you have a cornucopia of variety hiding in plain sight that is near impossible for the uninitiated to comprehend. For example, on a SPC product, the stone core can be a coarse or fine grind which will alter the products characteristics. The applied wear layer can impart stress on the product creating planar instabilities.

The instability of the product layers can create planar and dimensional instabilities in the products. None of these inherent deficiencies in some of these products have anything to do with the way they are installed. So, you can't blame what the product is doing on the people installing them. I've said this repeatedly, an installer cannot create a physical change in the product they install. They can't make it lift on the ends and edges, shrink, expand, gap, dome, cup, or curl. That's all on the product and nothing is going to fix that. Thinking adhesive will overcome the stress in vinyl plank and tile is like thinking some genie will magically appear to fix the defect. Ain't gonna happen.

In any relationship trust is eminently important. If you can't trust who you're doing business with and trust that they will be honest with you, what's the point in engaging their services? This goes for who you're sourcing the product from and who you're having look at it if there's a problem. Getting a manufacturer to honor a legitimate defect, even when there is a litany of the same problems occurring around the country, is getting more difficult. Getting someone who knows what's going on is a crap shoot. Most of the reports, as stated earlier, blame the installer for the product failing. Most of what we've seen over the last several years with hard surface plank and tile has been product issues, not installation. Most commercial flooring contractors will know if they messed up and take care of the problem and not bother the manufacturer.

We have to ask the question, how much do the manufacturers know about the product they don't manufacture? Do they actually manufacture the product they are selling?

How much do the claims departments know? Do they have any technical knowledge of the product? They are basically administrative people. The first line of defense is to deny the claim.



THE COMMERCIAL FLOORING REPORT

Lewis G. Migliore—President

P: 706.370.5888 or Email: lgmtcs@optilink.us

Just Click Here to Go to Our Website for All CFR Articles

LGMANDASSOCIATES.COM

***LGM* and Associates**

**Experts in Everything Flooring
From Substrates to Surfaces**

**No Issue is too Big, too Small or
too Far Away for Us to Handle**

Free Initial Consultation

**Complaint Determination, Consulting,
Resolution of Flooring Issues
Concrete/Moisture Issues and
Certified Product Testing
Dispute Resolution, Legal/Litigation
Assistance, and Proffered Expert Witness
Project Assistance
Develop Flooring Specifications and
Product Sample Evaluation**

***"When No One Else has Answers,
We Do"***

*Just click the image below or search under
Lew Migliore and let's connect on LinkedIn!!*

Linked in

**FLOOR
COVERING
INSTITUTE**

**Professional
Testing
Laboratory
Inc.**

fuse
COMMERCIAL FLOORING ALLIANCE

starnet★
worldwide
COMMERCIAL FLOORING PARTNERSHIP

CRI
THE CARPET AND RUG INSTITUTE

Page Layout By: Anita S. Drennon

There are so many varieties of products from all over the world today, that are not produced in the US, that it is not possible for the “manufacturer” or claims people to know the products. And, again, so many variations of manufacturing using pre and post consumer recycled content, PVC Free flooring, but still having a plasticizing component, that no one knows what affect that component will have on the product or people and a lot of “not knowing” going on.

You can't be an “expert” after a few days of training and call yourself a consultant. Such a joke. I've immersed my life in the claims, complaint and flooring failure segment of the industry and still will never say that I know it all, nor will any of our associates.

I'll share with you some of the cases we've had that expose the ignorance of people looking at flooring problems, the sheer lack of knowledge and common sense and how they are influenced by the people hiring them or that they work for.

In a recent legal case where I was deposed, we looked at a bevy of documents. Discovery is a wonderful thing in a lawsuit, producing all kinds of salient information. In this matter, three separate inspections were conducted. Each of the individual inspection reports blamed the installation for the problem. We knew the product was defective and proved it to be when we had it tested, and the manufacturer ultimately admitted that the product was defective in correspondence found in the discovery documents. Yet everyone else who looked at the product went to elaborate measures to blame the installation.

In yet another case vinyl plank flooring was installed and later lifted unevenly on the edges. The manufacturer's field tech person blamed this on installation. When we pulled attic stock planks from the box, they were configured the same as the lifting on the substrate. When the material was tested, the test revealed the inherent instability of the vinyl planks. Again, another miss call blaming installation for the product problem. The cause was clearly exhibited by the never installed product out of the box and by the lab testing. There was nothing wrong with the installation. By the way there is no pass/fail for these tests. The product can't move beyond a certain point to be considered defective, but if it shows that it is moving, even below the maximum allowed, it proves the product is unstable and moving which can be correlated

**FLOORCLOUD™**
Now You Know

**View remote, real-time, climate readings
direct from your jobsite...to reduce risk!**



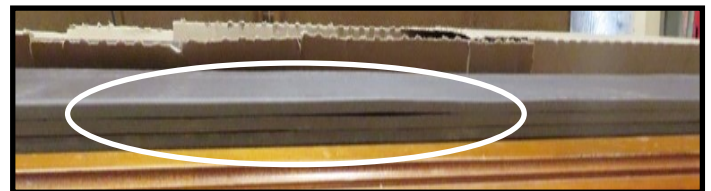


- No Wi-Fi needed
- Receive and share “out-of-specifications” alert notifications
- Capture & archive key site information
- Report Generation
- Contact us for more information & a free 30 day trial!

floorcloud.com
617.395.1668
support@floorcloud.com



Inspector said the vinyl plank flooring was installed too tight. It's glued to the floor. It doesn't require expansion space. Just like a carpet tile doesn't need it. This is a product defect.



Out of the box distortion, same as the condition of the installed flooring.

with what the product is doing where it's installed. The field tech inspector repeatedly uses the words "forensic investigation" incorrectly in his report. What he was doing was not a forensic investigation relative to the meaning of the word "forensics." I suppose he was trying to sound more technical.

Still another case where every plank was cupping on the floor. The product was doing the same thing out of the box. The inspector said it was installation since the product did not have enough expansion space. If every plank installed is doing exactly the same thing this is in the product. It has nothing to do with expansion. I covered this in a previous CFR.

The product is defective if it curls and cups out of the box. The fit at the perimeter has no effect on this flooring as there is no indication of the flooring stressed at those locations. The cupping and curling are uniform throughout the installation, another indication of this being a product problem. Lab tests showed the product is in fact curling. Just because it doesn't exceed a number doesn't mean it's not moving. In this case, it is and quite a bit. All the evidence needed to conclude that this is a product problem was available. This is a product defect.

Some time ago we spoke with an inspector who was looking at a job with a product we've had at least 20 claims on across the country. The product is legitimately defective beyond question. However, the inspector was afraid to say this in their report because they were concerned the manufacturer who commissioned them wouldn't use them anymore, and they had to think about their source of income. So, someone suffered from the lack of the truth being told.

We had one of the first inspection schools back in the '80's in Dalton and trained manufacturers claims managers and analysts as well as hundreds of other people. One of the most important things we taught students was to determine if what you are looking at is or is not a manufacturing defect. If so, what is it and why, and if not, what is it and why? That's not the case anymore since many manufacturers don't want the inspectors they hire to come to any conclusions; they want to do it. Do you think you can trust that?

This is the problem. Many independent or manufacturer's inspectors don't know what they're looking at, don't understand the product and can't make a determination and the manufacturers don't want them to.

Any conclusion reached on a complaint must be definite. Not "within a reasonable degree of certainty." At LGM we don't get hired to be "within a reasonable degree of certainty." Our clients benefit from the exact cause of the problem. We have to know, it's our job, and our obligation to our clients. Truthful, independent, unbiased, objective, and specific answers are all we have, regardless of who retains us.

I like this saying below because the last sentence succinctly states my point. We see this a lot. People making statements about things they don't know they don't know, while thinking they do.

"Reports that say that something hasn't happened are always interesting to me, because as we know, there are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns- the ones we don't know we don't know."
— Donald Rumsfeld

If you have a question, a problem or want to avoid having a problem, contact us. We're here to help you stay out of trouble. And when no one else has an answer, we do - always.

LGM and Associates
TECHNICAL FLOORING SERVICES

The Floorcovering Experts

519 Oxford Street Dalton, GA 30720 P (706) 370-5888 F (706) 270-0482
Email: lgmtcs@optilink.us Website: lgmandassociates.com

Guidance, Consulting, Determination Legal Assistance and Resolution of Flooring Issues:

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

Right Product in the Right Place: Get it in the Door; Keep it on the Floor

- Construction/Renovation Project Assistance to Determine Suitable Flooring
- Develop Flooring Specifications - Installation Assistance
- New Flooring Product Development and Marketing
- Educational Seminars (Corporate and Personal/Individual)

"WHEN NO ONE ELSE HAS ANSWERS, WE DO"

Commercial Flooring Report

Ad Size and Pricing

519 Oxford Street • Dalton, GA 30720—lgmtcs@optilink.us—706.370.5888

CFR Provides the most Coverage and Best Value for Your Advertising Dollar

Link to Your Website is Embedded in Your Ad

All Three Ad Sizes Can be Customized to Your Liking

Free to Recipients - Sharing and Posting to Your Website is Encouraged

Pertinent and Relevant Information in Each CFR Issue

Totally Green – No Paper Used for Publication

Over 100,000 plus Readers and Growing

Archived on LGMandAssociates.com and other Websites

Just Click Here 

Ad Size—1" x 2"

\$ 4,000—12 Issues

\$ 335—per Issue

Ad Size—3.5" x 3.5"

\$ 6,000—12 Issues

\$ 500—per Issue

Ad Size—5" x 3.5"

\$ 9,600—12 Issues

\$ 800—per Issue



Does Your Warehouse Look Like This??

Is Warehouse Space an Issue?



Call Us to turn Your Excess Inventory into

CASH!!!



surplus@overstockfloorzusa.com

Kolt Privett - 770-530-4709

We prefer broadloom, carpet rems, carpet tile and LVP