



Products like DriTac's MegaBond help minimize vinyl plank shrinkage.

To address the demand for a plethora of performance properties from moisture mitigation to fast-drying epoxies and self-levelers, flooring adhesive suppliers have continued to enhance existing products and introduce new ones.

These refinements satisfy the need for faster cure times, easier application, environmental sustainability, protection against moisture, improved acoustical properties, and overall solid performance, taking on multi-faceted features.

Moisture has also become more problematic as the composition of adhesives has changed in recent years, sometimes creating the need for a moisture mitigation system. Karen Bellinger, business development at Schönox HPS North America, recommends always conducting a moisture test in a slab prior to flooring installation.

While many high-quality installation and moisture mitigation systems can be a little more expensive, the end result is worth the initial investment, Bellinger added.

"With the trend going to more resilient flooring, we don't want to skimp on the subfloor," Bellinger said. "A lot of people don't talk about it or think they need to pay attention to it. One of my jobs is going to A&D firms and bringing that awareness. A lot of times it's not factored into the end cost, moisture mitigation gets left out of a lot of bids, then they have

moisture issues. But through saving time and money with a full solution system, you're going to get a better-looking floor."

HEALTH & ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS

ASTM International's adhesives standards ensure manufacturers around the globe test their products and components. These standards help identify properties like viscosity, adhesion, shear strength and shear modulus. Since adhesives are utilized to form bonds or joints between a variety of adhered materials, standards also help to identify adhesive bond or joint mechanical properties like strength, creep, fracture and fatigue. The different effects of environmental factors on adhesive bonds and joints are also compared.

Another organization, the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), has published requirements designed to reduce the quantity of indoor air contaminants that are considered "odorless, irritating and/or harmful to the comfort and well-being of installers and occupants." It lists volatile organic compound (VOC) limits that flooring adhesives used in interior applications must comply with in its IEQ Credit 4.1 requirements.

Adhesives, sealants and sealant primers should also comply with South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) Rule #1168.

Other relevant associations and certifications include Greenguard,

FloorScore and Green Seal.

To address the specific needs of various projects, for example, thinset adhesives have been designed with features such as unique wetting out characteristics, non-sag performance and extended open time to perform in demanding applications such as continuous water immersion, thermal exposure and heavy traffic and service areas.

For use in an evolving market segment, wear-rated, self-leveling compounds have been introduced for customers who don't plan to use a floor covering but want a concrete topping that's durable and can be polished. These are being installed in a variety of applications including retail, restaurants, offices and warehouses.

Also available are multi-use adhesive technologies that can be easily cleaned off the surface of hardwood flooring when cured or uncured. This helps prevent harming the finish of the floor and defeats one of the major challenges traditional moisture-curing adhesives have faced for many years.

Major flooring market shifts, such as the sales growth of luxury vinyl plank (LVP) and luxury vinyl tile (LVT), also continue to drive changes in the types of adhesives that are called for.

Whatever flooring adhesives are specified, it's important to remember that their success depends on proper preparation of the subfloor as well as acclimation and maintenance in strict accordance with the supplier's recommendations.