

Noise-reducing cushion quietly makes a statement

By Megan Salzano

With most of the country homebound during the COVID-19 pandemic, consumers have spent much more time living on their floors than the typical work week allows. This means consumers are not only looking to upgrade the old flooring they've been staring at for weeks, but they have also started to realize the heavy impact flooring can have on the everyday at-home experience.

One major takeaway for consumers has been the impact of sound. "With more people working from home these days, noise reduction is far more important than ever," said Chris Palmer, vice president of sales, Leggett & Platt. "They will be more open than ever to any noise relief they can get."

With today's consumers becoming more in tune with healthy living and providing safe and stress-free environments for themselves and their families, the importance of sound reduction will no doubt grow in importance as well as it ties closely to healthy living. "Most people don't consider sound reduction to be important until there is a problem, but it is an essential part of a healthy lifestyle," said Andrew Stafford, marketing director, Healthier Choice. "Sound pollution, such as noisy floors, contributes to stress and anxiety by aggravating underlying mental and physical health conditions. Numerous studies have linked noise pollution to increased anxiety, depression, high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke. Even small increases in ambient noise can have significant effects."

Recent trends within the home have already led to increased noise levels for consumers. The switch from carpet to hard surface, for example, has increased the possibility of added noise for many consumers. "As consumers eliminate soft surface flooring materials, they tend to switch over to LVT, ceramic or hardwood," said Thomas Utley, technical expert, Ardex. "These surfaces are more rigid and amplify impact sound such as noise heard from regular foot traffic."

Dave Cima, Eastern sales director, DriTac Flooring Products, agreed. "Certain popular floor coverings—such as laminate flooring—are inherently noisy or hollow sounding when walked upon. It could be tremendously disappointing for an end-user to install their ideal flooring, only to discover that it allows far too much noise to pass through to be an acceptable home or working environment."

When it comes to multi-family housing, noise reduction is already top of mind for many builders—building regulations in place today mandate how much noise is acceptable between units—and homeowners.

"There is a surging demand for multi-family housing in the USA, fueled mainly by millennials with a desire for an urban life, simplicity and to live near like-minded people," said John Bonney, vice president of sales operations, Schönox. "With multi-level living, as in all residential environments, sound plays an important role, with people wanting peace and quiet in their homes."

Underlayments that provide noise-reduction benefits can offer the relief consumers today crave. These sundry products are also a valuable sale for flooring dealer that help not only increase the sale but provide a successful installation. "Sound-reduction underlayments are the most important add-on sale for any hard surface flooring," said Jim Wink, vice president of sales and marketing, Foam Products. "This sale also provides additional profit dollars for the flooring dealer."

Presented here is a curated assortment of best-in-class, sound-reducing underlayments available to retailers today.

(For more on underlayments and how to successfully make the sale, visit FCNews.net.)

Ardex DS 70 Acoustic Mat

The Ardex DS 70 Acoustic Mat is a high-performance, flat, resilient, sound-control underlayment made from a formulation of high-quality, post-consumer recycled, wear- and water-resistant rubber granules. It is used directly under hard surface flooring on above-grade concrete and wood joist substrates. It is made from 92% recycled rubber and can be installed quickly and easily using Henry 356C MultiPro Carpet and Sheet Vinyl Adhesive pre-mixed adhesive. It is available in a 2mm or 5mm thickness.



DriTac 8301 Impact

DriTac 8301 Impact is a technologically advanced 1mm underlayment and acoustical barrier for successful glue-down or floating installations of a variety of resilient floors, including LVT/LVP, WPC, MLF and carpet tile. Impact contains negligible VOC content and is hypo-allergenic and mold/mildew/bacteria-resistant with no toxic additives.



Foam Products Eco Ultimate Silencer

Eco Ultimate Silencer is for all laminates and wood flooring that can be installed with floating, glue-down or nail-down planks. It meets the IIC/STC sound requirements by HOAs, multi-story family apartment/condos and satisfies the single-family homeowner on both the main and upper levels of their home. It is also GreenGuard Gold certified.



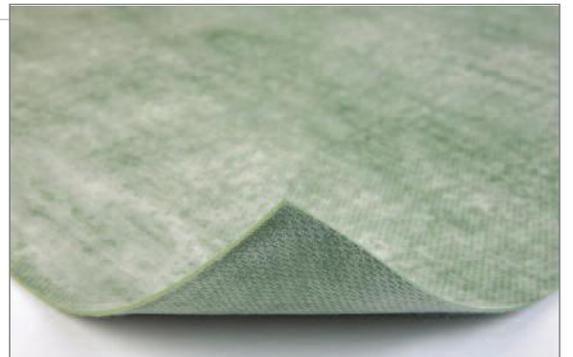
Healthier Choice Sound Solution

Sound Solution provides improved sound control for laminate, engineered or hardwood installations. With the strength of soy-based polyurethane, it performs over time without losing thickness or quality. It is also Greenguard certified and offers lifetime protection against microbial growth.



Leggett & Platt Whisper Step

Whisper Step LV underlayment features high-density support under luxury vinyl flooring. It provides significant reduction to impact noise in the room and floor below, is guaranteed not to break down for the life of the floor and can be used over most substrates. It also features Fresh Dimension antimicrobial that inhibits the growth of mold, mildew and odor-causing bacteria.



MP Global Quiet Walk

QuietWalk underlayments utilize a recycled fiber blend formulated through a patented process while offering a host of benefits to the underside of flooring materials. QuietWalk offers a unique, dense composition, blanketing the underside of the floor to provide a sound-dampening layer that dissipates sound from traveling to other rooms.



Schönox TS

Schönox TS impact sound-insulating underlayment is suitable for improving impact sound insulation, heat insulation and living comfort in residential areas. At a thickness of 1/8-inch, Schönox TS improves impact sound insulation by up to 17 decibels. Schönox TS is made of cork and recycled urethane granules and provides additional thermal insulation.



WeCork WECU Soundless

WECU Soundless meets typical building codes for sound control for buildings with a suspended ceiling under ceramic tile and non-suspended ceilings under hardwood and laminate. With a thickness of 6mm, it features a special preservative incorporated into the cork and binder mixture, making WECU impenetrable to moisture.

