

Latest padding products offer the silent treatment

By Jacqueline Hinchcliffe

FOAM PRODUCTS

Foam Products offers two premium acoustical underlayments designed to meet all the condo HOA and high-rise building sound-reduction requirements. The first is Eco Ultimate Silencer acoustical underlayment, which is suitable for laminate, bamboo, hardwood plank and engineered wood. Aside from being 100% recyclable and environmentally friendly, Eco Ultimate Silencer features Crushpruf technology that resists indentations. The product is also suitable for use with radiant heat flooring and contains anti-microbial properties.

Next is Silencer LVT, which is designed for use with all vinyl plank flooring. Like Eco Ultimate Silencer, the product is 100% recyclable and contains anti-microbial properties. Both products are Greenguard certified and made of high-density polyurethane foam and renewable vegetable oils.



HEALTHIER CHOICE

OmniChoice Acoustical Underlayment is designed to reduce unwanted noise by up to 22 decibels. This patented, high-density polyurethane acoustic foam achieves sound absorption due to its high solid content compared to more lightweight foams, according to the company. OmniChoice works under vinyl plank, laminate, engineered wood, solid hardwood, ceramic tile, stone flooring and is compatible with various substrates.

"Laminate and vinyl have pre-attached pads that lack critical features that Healthier Choice foam offers," said Andrew Stafford, vice president of marketing and technical services, Healthier Choice.



In today's work-home settings, silence is indeed golden. The age-old expression is especially relevant these days as more people work from home and require a more comfortable and tranquil environment. That's where sound-reducing padding and underlayment products shine. These essential installation products not only reduce noise transfer from room-to-room but also from ceiling to the floor below in multi-family applications.

From eco-friendly foam and cork to other recycled materials, homeowners and end users have no shortage of underlayment options at their disposal. Following is a sampling of the latest sound-reducing underlayments available today:

MP GLOBAL

Initially designed as a subfloor assist when replacing an old floor covering, FloorLyft from MP Global adds support to the overlying floor while providing high acoustic and insulating values. This 6mm-thick padding is ideal for multi-family housing such as apartments or condominiums to quiet impact sound and floor-to-ceiling noise while reducing sound transmission to the rooms below.

"This absorption of impact energy including noise energy can make living spaces more harmonious to live in and floors to feel more solid and comfortable underfoot," said Deanna Summers, marketing and account manager, MP Global.

In side-by-side tests, the recycled fiber content of FloorLyft is shown to absorb much more impact energy than products made of foam, according to Summers. In addition to its high-performance, sound-absorption capabilities, FloorLyft can also be used as a "booster" to lift vinyl flooring to close unwanted gaps between the floor and trim.



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SIKA-DRITAC

Sika-Dritac's 8400 EnviroTread series is designed to provide a high-level of sound control against unwanted noise transmission while also improving footfall sound

performance. This high-performance rubber underlayment, which is available in 2mm, 5mm and 10mm versions, can be used for both glue-down and floating installations of carpet, ceramic tile, laminate, hardwood and more. It's repurposed from up to 100% post-consumer waste and is VOC compliant. In addition, Dritac's 8402, 8405 and 8410 feature anti-crush properties and reduce minor subfloor irregularities.



WE CORK

WE Cork's Soundless and Soundless+ is a high-density cork underlayment designed to provide improved sound control quality for a variety of installations, including ceramic tile, stone, porcelain and more. "This is especially important for high-rise condos where sound control matters with strict building code and condo association requirements," said Tina Crossland, national sales manager, WE Cork.

Due to its cellular structure, this product never loses its shape and has 200 million enclosed air cells in every cubic inch—which contributes to its acoustic abilities. In addition to sound control, WE Cork's Soundless and Soundless+ provides crack isolation for tiles, thermal insulation and comfort underfoot. It's resistant to mold and mildew, contains no harmful chemicals and is easy to install due to its light weight. "This is a product you can really feel great about," Crossland said.

