



nerej

Lees Carpets' reputation is built as being the best value, highest performance carpet on the market

July 23, 2008 - Spotlights

As a building manager, facilities manager, or operations person, you are often called upon to select products that will perform and service all your tenants' needs.

Have you ever had a pipe burst and seen a carpet mill still stand behind its warranty or have a nasty spill from a client whose lease expires the following month and the warranty has expired? Lees Carpets, a division of Mohawk Industries, that built its "rock-solid" reputation as being the best value, highest performance carpet in the market. Even the brand's tag line revolves around its ability to deliver exceptional products that provide unmatched performance. So what makes Lees Carpets' exceptional?

Lees Brand has been around for over 165 years. Lees has continually progressed and innovated to push the commercial carpet industry to new performance levels. For the first 100 years, wool was the main fiber we worked with, before nylon was invented. Here are some "innovation firsts" that have made Lees a market leader:

- * 1st carpet manufacturer, in 1964, to offer modular tiles, called Nylotile, a predecessor of Lees modular tiles.
- * 1st carpet manufacturer, in 1971, to offer a high performance broadloom backing system called Unibond.
- * 1st carpet manufacturer, in 1987, to offer a lifetime non-prorated performance warranty with the Unibond backing system.
- * 1st and still only carpet manufacturer, in 1991, to offer Duracolor, a patented lifetime warranty against stains and color fade on yarn dyed carpets.

Today, Lees offers 12' wide performance broadloom carpets and 24"x24" modular tiles. Both products come standard with lifetime, non-prorated warranties covering edge ravel, delamination, tuft bind loss and a permanent stain resistance for as long as the carpet is on the floor. This means Lees makes carpet products that will never fall apart or stain.

One of the best warranty features of Unibond, Lees 12' wide broadloom carpet, is that it even covers broken pipe or flood damage. The Lees broadloom can be flooded under a foot of water and still warranted for life with no mold or mildew damage. Talk about a truly sustainable carpet. Lees Unibond does not even need to be welded at the seams for its edge ravel warranty or to offer this flood barrier, our adhesive takes care of that. Lees Unibond RE contains 20% post consumer recycled content by total product weight.

Lees' warranties just get better with its patented Duracolor. Duracolor is a coloring process of a permanently stain resistant nylon. It allows water only cleaning with no shampooing. This means no harsh chemicals need to be used and flushed down drains. Lees developed this warranty using a proprietary version of the best performing nylon in the industry, Dupont Antron Legacy Nylon.

DuPont is also the company that invented nylon over 60 years ago. In the late 1980s, DuPont created a version of Antron Legacy Nylon that could never be stained, but Lees was the company that figured out how to color it, and received a patent for that with Duracolor.

As a standard product offering, DuPont's Antron Legacy Nylon states "Ultimate in soil resistance and appearance retention. Unsurpassed styling flexibility. Ideal for heavy traffic and soiling areas." This is a yarn-dyed nylon, not a solution-dyed nylon.

DuPont states its own DSDN, DuPont Solution Dyed Nylon, as "Ideal when budget constraints outweigh performance criteria." I found this to be interesting when many manufacturers push solution dyed carpets as high performing products. Lees has some solution dyed carpets, but we would not recommend using them in areas where heavy traffic occurs or performance was needed.

There are many performance characteristics that yarn dyed nylon has over solution dyed nylon. First of all, yarn-dyed nylon is recommended, by DuPont and Invista, for heavy traffic areas. This means it vacuums clean easier than solution dyed nylon. Most walk off systems and products that collect dirt in entrances of buildings are solution dyed. They are solution dyed because the process of coloring solution dyed products includes lubrication that attracts dirt. This makes solution dyed good for cleaning your feet, but that is not a great characteristic for inside many facilities. It makes it a maintenance problem when the dirt trails in and the carpet cannot be vacuumed clean. Another benefit of yarn-dyed nylons are that they can be colored any color in the rainbow, with space dyed capabilities. This means many different colors on one strand of nylon. This is how the most beautiful award winning carpets are manufactured.

Lees was awarded the Gold Award at NeoCon in Chicago for its modular carpet tile collection called Spaces and Places. The yarn dyed carpet tiles were made from Antron Legacy nylon and colored with Lees Duracolor.

The standard backing system for Lees' carpet tiles is called Encycle. Encycle is a true model for sustainable design. It consists of 3 thermoplastic layers and zero water based components. This allows the backing to be recycled back into itself without separation. Encycle tiles incorporate 35% pre-consumer recycled content by total product weight and uses 28% less virgin raw materials. The best part is that Encycle is 100% PVC-free.

Sean Martins is a territory manager with Lees Carpets, Boston.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540