An Introduction to NSF 342 – Sustainability Assessment for Wallcovering Products

About the Standard

The wallcovering industry has investigated methods to support green building initiatives and has developed this sustainability standard to encourage innovation and transparency within the wallcovering product supply chain. This voluntary effort has identified specific opportunities within this industry that will confirm product performance, encourage exceeding legislative requirements, will provide an international benchmark for manufacturing processes. Additionally, the distributor sector of this market has been included as an integral partner in the development of the standard and is posed to play an important role in product certification that extends the range of environmental improvement opportunities beyond the manufacturing sector. This is a broader market approach to product sustainability and delegates responsibility deeply into the supply chain. The standard has approached sustainability across the entire spectrum of the wallcovering product market. Everything from supplier raw material extraction to manufacturing to distribution to designers/architects, and end of life issues are addressed. This broad approach recognizes that decisions made at many possible points effect the sustainability of a product.

This standard has been developed to:

1. Increase the economic value of sustainable wallcovering throughout the supply chain by enhancing market demand for sustainable wallcovering products;
2. Provide information that enables specifiers to sort out the complex information on sustainable attributes;
3. Identify other consensus based standards and sustainable wallcovering;
4. Educate and instruct all stakeholders in the wallcovering supply chain; and
5. Encourage competition between manufacturers, distributors and their suppliers to seek out or develop environmentally preferable processes, practices, power sources, and materials.

The proposed standard is the result of this collaboration.

The sustainable assessment criteria for Wallcovering Manufacturing and Distribution are divided into five subject categories:

1. Informed Product Design
2. Intelligent Product Manufacturing
3. Long-term Value
4. Progressive Corporate Governance
5. Innovation

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Each of the previous criteria will be evaluated and a point-based scoring system will be applied. The final scores will result in a Sustainable Product Achievement from the entry level Conformant through Silver, Gold and ultimately Platinum.

Procedures will be in place to regularly monitor and measure continued performance of products to this standard at least once every three years.

**About the Wallcoverings Association:**

The Wallcoverings Association (WA) is a nonprofit trade association representing wallcoverings manufacturers, distributors, and suppliers to the industry. The WA provides an excellent vehicle for communication between various segments of the wallcoverings industry while promoting the use of wallcoverings in the marketplace.

The official mission of the Wallcoverings Association is "to advance the welfare of members engaged in the manufacturing, distribution and sales of wallcoverings." Our vision is to have residential and commercial consumers think of wallcoverings as their interior product of choice.

**About NSF International:**

NSF International, an independent, not-for-profit organization, certifies products and writes standards for food, water and consumer goods to minimize adverse health effects and protect the environment (www.nsf.org). Founded in 1944, NSF is committed to protecting human health and safety worldwide and operates in more than 120 countries. NSF is a World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Food and Water Safety and Indoor Environment.

NSF International's Sustainability Program focuses on three areas: product assessment, standards development, and process verification. Product assessments include testing and certification for sustainable products such as green chemicals and building products. NSF also develops standards for sustainability products such as wallcoverings, carpet, flooring, and other commercial building materials. NSF International is a leading provider of process verification services, which include greenhouse gas verification, environmental footprinting, and environmental management systems registrations.

**Contact Us**

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