

SNAP BACK: GREEN MATERIALS



JOE EISNER
Architect +
Principal
Eisner Design
New York City

“Tac Acoustic panels are great not only for acoustics but also as a wall tack board material in the home or office. The product is extremely lightweight and durable as a tack board, as pinholes do not register in the panel’s polypropylene bead composition. While available only in black and white, the Tac panels have an interesting look of compressed mini packing peanuts, have no VOCs in their chemical makeup, and are made from a mold, so there is virtually no waste in the manufacturing process.”



LAUREN ROTTET
Architect + Principal
Rottet Studio
Houston

“There are so many eco-friendly surface materials to choose from now. While working on the James Royal Palm, opening in Miami this fall, we employed several, as the brand is committed to being environmentally aware. Some of my favorites are Maya Romanoff’s “braided hemp” wallcovering, which integrates a rapidly renewable material made with recycled content; certified Green Label Plus sisal rugs from Natural Carpet Company; and Carnegie Xorel upholstery fabric, which holds a cradle-to-cradle silver certification.”



CRISTINA CRESPO
Sustainability
Specialist
Gensler
Washington, D.C.

“We like the idea of replacing wood with wood alternatives to promote sustainability in our projects. For example, on a recent retail project design director Néstor Santa-Cruz used a wallcovering by Piet Heineek that emulates barn scrap wood instead of applying an actual wood finish. This wallpaper, manufactured using eco-friendly strategies, not only allowed him to create the desired look cost-effectively, but offered faster installation, simpler transportation, reduced packaging, and, most importantly, easier maintenance.”

Biophilia + Other Au Naturel Trends



THE MIX OF PATTERNS in Interface’s Urban Retreat carpet tile offers the look of moss growing on stone, with veins of green running across the floor.

IT’S INCREASINGLY CLEAR that architects and manufacturers alike are refining their interpretation of the many shades of green design. Products with recycled content no longer have to look granola-crunchy to be environmentally responsible; many manage to be polished as well as earthy. Nonetheless, a preference for organic-looking surfaces and old-world craftsmanship is emerging, says New York–based architect Andrew Franz: “There’s a return to more irregularity, with natural or natural-looking surfaces that have a sense of handcraft.”

Even man-made surfaces are taking on more organic qualities, with wallpapers and tiles featuring the look and feel of wood, or engineered or solid surfaces fabricated to mimic stone. Take the new Urban Retreat collection of modular carpet tiles from Interface: The eco-friendly flooring echoes natural materials with textures reminiscent of grass, pebbles, earth, and sand. It was also inspired by the notion of “biophilia,” a concept that links positive human emotional response toward flora and fauna with an innate survival instinct.

Taking a twist on this theme, the carpet tiles merge naturalistic qualities with urban influences that appeal to the millennial generation. “Research suggests that as many as 88% of millennials would prefer to live in an urban setting,” says David Oakey, Interface’s long-time design collaborator, who conceived the collection and introduced it at NeoCon in June. “Instead of trying to create glass and concrete cities that we need to escape in order to enjoy nature, we’re bringing nature to the urban landscape with these designs.”

The new collection also takes the environmentalist’s mantra of buying local one step further. Urban Retreat represents the company’s first full-fledged global launch — between June and October, Interface will introduce the collection in Asia, Australia, Europe, India, Africa, and the Middle East. Supported by local production on four continents, the carpet will be able to be produced locally without complication and long-distance shipping issues. If Interface’s approach to sustainable design is any indication, it is hopeful that as the world shrinks, good global citizenship will expand to a whole new level. —J.N.

SNAPSHOTS

NEW MATH

< 35%

Amount of households that recycle.
<10% of businesses in the U.S. recycle

SOURCE: NATIONAL RECYCLING COALITION AND THE U.S. EPA

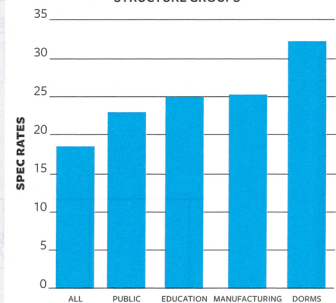
8,000 LBS

The amount of waste created from the construction of a 2,000 sq. ft. home.

SOURCE: IDAHO FOREST PRODUCTS COMMISSION

FSC-CERTIFIED WOOD

SPEC RATE FOR 2006 THROUGH 2012Q1 BY TOP STRUCTURE GROUPS



SOURCE: MCGRAW-HILL CONSTRUCTION RESEARCH + ANALYTICS

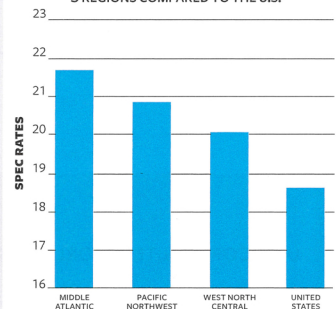
SNAP FACT

Just months after the adoption of **Green Squared (ANSI A138.1)**, an all-encompassing multi-attribute sustainability standard for tile and tile installation materials, the first-ever certified sustainable tile products were introduced in April from manufacturers including Mapei, Marazzi, and Laticrete.

SOURCE: TILE COUNCIL OF NORTH AMERICA

FSC-CERTIFIED WOOD

SPEC RATE FROM 2006 TO 2012Q1 OVER THE TOP 3 REGIONS COMPARED TO THE U.S.



SOURCE: MCGRAW-HILL CONSTRUCTION RESEARCH + ANALYTICS

WHAT’S TRENDING IN GREEN

GREEN ROOF

RECYCLED PLASTIC LUMBER

RECYCLED RUBBER PAVERS

SOURCE: TOP SEARCHES IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS AT SWEETS.COM