

FLEXIBLE VINYL MATTERS

APRIL 2013



INFORM, ADVOCATE, ACT

WWW.FLEXVINYLALLIANCE.COM

The Flexible Vinyl Alliance (FVA) is a coalition of over 90 companies representing the full value chain of the flexible vinyl industry from resin supply to compounding, manufacturing and retail. The FVA is further affiliated with 900 additional businesses through its allied trade relationships.

FVA CRITIQUES LATEST USGBC LEED PROPOSAL

In comments submitted to the US Green Building Council (USGBC) on March 31, FVA questioned the inclusiveness of LEED's process and the material-bias recommendations in the latest draft of the largest de-facto green building standard in use today. The comments were in response to Comment Period 6 of LEED 2012 v4, expected to be balloted for adoption in the summer of 2013. FVA pointed out the flaws in the LEED approach stating that "we remain concerned that the process by which USGBC reaches 'consensus' decisions on what provisions to include in updating its standards lack the legitimate input of a broad base of building product experts that we feel is critical to a true, transparent consensus-based approach to standards-setting."

In reference to the materials-bias of the latest proposal, known as MRc4, FVA states that while "the intent to MRc4 is to encourage the use of products and materials for which life cycle information is available," that have "environmentally, economically, and socially preferable life-cycle impacts," or that have been "verified to have improved life-cycle impacts," most of the compliance paths in this credit "fail to take account of life-cycle evaluations or to advance the best material from a life-cycle perspective." FVA's comments were consistent with those submitted by the Resilient Floor Covering Institute, the Society of the Plastics Industries, the Vinyl Institute and the American High Performance Buildings Coalition. For more information on USGBC and LEED, contact Kevin Ott at FVA.



In The News

Telecommunications Cable for Internet Connectivity

A large percentage of the nation's indoor optical fiber, coaxial and Category 5e, 6 and 6A twisted pair cables are manufactured by CommScope. These products help to deliver internet and cable to many homes and businesses. Cables enable reliable transmission of information while meeting fire safety standards.

While unknown to most consumers, these connections to the telecommunications infrastructure are designed with high quality polymers, metals, fibers and other materials to meet specific applications requirements. Without these specialized cables, the last one hundred feet of the physical layer that directly connects customers to the Information Super-Highway would not be possible.

PVC is often the best choice for the protective jacket on these products and provides an optimal blend of ease of installation, cost effectiveness, durability and flame retardancy.

For more information, visit www.commscope.com.



ADVOCACY IN ACTION

FVA Encourages Even-Handed Approach to GSA in Recommending Green Building Standards for Feds

On April 8, the FVA submitted official comments to the General Services Administration (GSA) cautioning them to consider only legitimate green building rating systems, inclusive of GBI's Green Globes, that adhere to true "life-cycle" based assessments for Federal buildings. Referencing the testimony of Kevin Ott before the GSA Advisory Committee in May of 2012, FVA reiterated that "it is the opinion of the members of the Alliance that as currently construed, GSA should **NOT** recommend USGBC's *LEED* or the *Living Building Challenge* as part of its Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) review, unless they are amended. Both of these certification systems seek to employ arbitrary chemical avoidance lists. The GSA is the nation's largest landlord, providing space for more than 400 Federal agencies and commissions with more than one million employees and contractors.



Industry Groups Respond to Flawed Swedish Flooring "Study"

In its February 2013 issue, *Indoor Air* journal published a phthalate study that linked the health of children with the purported presence of vinyl flooring in the home, in this case Swedish homes. While such studies are ubiquitous, the flaws in this particular evaluation led to a direct response to the journal from representatives of four major trade associations: SPI, VI, ACC and FVA. See the study at <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1600-0668.2012.00788.x/abstract>. As stated in the vinyl industry's published response, "According to the information presented in the publication, the authors reached their conclusion without (1) confirming the presence of PVC flooring in the infants' homes, (2) verifying the presence of phthalates in the flooring, (3) measuring the actual phthalate levels in the homes, or (4) ensuring that the biological samples were handled appropriately prior to analysis." For the full text Letter to the Publisher visit <http://dl.dropbox.com/u/8315819/Joint%20Letter%20to%20Indoor%20Air.pdf>.

Important Dates

Vinyl Institute Congressional Fly-In

May 15 - 16, 2013
Washington, DC

<http://www.vinylinfo.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/2013-Fly-In-Reg.pdf>

24th Annual SPI-FVPD Compounders Conference

July 14 - 17, 2013

Charleston, South Carolina

This SPI-sponsored event will include a full program of technical and advocacy topics along with memorable reception sites.

<http://www.plasticsindustry.org/FVPC/content.cfm?ItemNumber=3775&navItemNumber=2610>

VINYLTEC 2013

PVC Processing and Additives

October 21- 23, 2013

Iselin, New Jersey

Vinyl Institute Annual Meeting

November 5 - 7, 2013

Orlando, Florida

Membership

For more information and to join:

The Flexible Vinyl Alliance is an advocacy network with over 200 registered and active members that have flexible vinyl interests and who represent the industry's full value chain. The FVA helps to educate and connect companies to state and local issues with potential business impact. Membership is free of charge. If your organization is part of the flexible vinyl value chain, please enroll on the FVA website.

www.flexvinylalliance.com

Phone: 202.721.4125

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EPA's Design for the Environment (DfE) Update

EPA's analysis of alternatives to specific phthalates, known as the Design for the Environment Project (DfE) is ongoing. According to the EPA, it is slated to publish its *Alternatives Assessment for Certain Phthalates Partnership* in Winter of 2014 as part of its non-regulatory hazard assessment of common vinyl plasticizers. More information is available at <http://www.epa.gov/dfepubs/projects/phthalates/index.html>. FVA met with staff and leadership of the DfE program in December 2012 and is working to provide data addressing exposure and risk, as well as the challenges and cost associated with substitution.

Join FVA on LinkedIn

Share information, post and stay up to date on the latest industry news and events by joining the Flexible Vinyl Alliance on LinkedIn www.linkedin.com.

