Tek Newsletter Vol. 5 No. 11 Nov. 17, 2005

LuxuryBac: Steps in the Right Direction

As we have mentioned many times before, the carpet industry continues to take steps in the right direction. Improvements in fibers, dyestuffs, stain resistant technologies, and new innovations in design and construction are on going and, while some consumers still look for answers such as "how cheap" and "how fast", everyday talk about what's new and better combined with easy access to the internet has resulted in resourceful shoppers who are now almost like an encyclopedia of knowledge. Consumers are getting more and more educated as information becomes more readily available to them. These smart, quality-minded individuals look for better looking, longer lasting carpets and place much well deserved emphasis on the quality of installation as one of the key ingredients to their overall satisfaction with their carpet purchase. Besides, there is no problem with asking good questions since they help all of us to avoid dumb mistakes.

It's no secret that skilled, quality-minded installers help carpet manufacturers, dealers, and consumers avoid hectic days. Successful dealers recognize the competitive value of a quality installation. They promote their skilled installers and quality of installation as part of their sales formula. They know that much of their referral business happens because of successful installations obtained with previous sales. Poor installations, on the other hand, often leave consumers with a bad taste that they feel can only be remedied by the selection of an alternate floor covering. Perhaps it is suffice to simply say that cutting corners during the installation process can be likened to a self-inflicted wound that will eventually require attention.

It is undeniable that much of our industries continued growth stems from vast efforts in the research and development of new and better products and these products are not familiar to many long-time installers. As a result, it is not uncommon to find certain trade magazines lament about the need for installers to keep current with our industry innovations. Joining one of the installation trade associations, Installers can learn more about the floor covering industry, or by attending regional workshops to obtain additional training. Knowledge always pays in dividends and our industry applauds these efforts!

As part of our own on-going research and development commitment to create new and improved products we introduced our unique LuxuryBac carpet backing system.

LuxuryBac offers many virtues that we have already expounded on, including easy and convenient installation features. However, like anything new and

different there is a tendency to be met with some resistance, especially by installers who cut their teeth on other traditional backing systems. The good thing about LuxuryBac is; there are no special training needs or special installation sundry requirements necessary to install this backing system! If an installer is familiar with our industry's installation standards and requirements and has demonstrated the fundamental skills necessary to install conventional backing systems using the tackless method they can install LuxuryBac. Skilled installers can overwhelm consumers with high quality installations using carpets made with our LuxuryBac without having to acquire additional training, a wealth of new information, or special survival skills!

Outside the information found in the Carpet and Rug Institute's, CRI 105 Standards for Installation, here are few tidbits of everyday carpet installation wisdom that can be used to help insure for a successful installation using LuxuryBac:

- LuxuryBac weighs approximately 4.75 oz. per square yard more than the commonly used woven synthetic secondary backing. While this added weight is miniscule, applying more air beneath LuxuryBac (such as fluffing the carpet) will assist in positioning the carpet before installation.
- Use a multi-purpose seam sealer on all cut edges to be seamed. Be certain the seam sealer has been given ample time to cure before hot melting the seams (usually 15 minutes or less).
- Use a light to medium grade, low-profile hot melt seam tape made with reinforced scrim. A low-melt seam tape is recommended in order to obtain adequate liquidness viscosity (i.e., wet-out, puddle) of the seam tape adhesive and aggressive bonding to the backing. Seam iron thermostat settings should be set at 2.5 for low-melt seam tape (3.0 for standard tape) to obtain the highest level of flow and penetration of the seam adhesive.
- Use a good-grade 2" wide pad seam tape (such as duct tape) to help reinforce pad seams.
- Smooth backing systems like LuxuryBac do not offer the open scrim similar to woven secondary backings, which allows for easy anchoring of the seam tape adhesive to the carpet's backing. Because of this, the use of a flat smooth seam roller is highly recommended.
- Use a wood or plastic seam weight, 13-17 lb. to help secure the seam tape adhesive to the carpet's backing. Perforated models are recommended since they allow hot melt seams to cool faster.

- LuxuryBac should be stretched 1.0 to 1.5% in both length and width directions. To reduce seam peaking potential apply less (not more) stretch in the width direction of the carpet.
- Carpet pad made with heat laminated slip film coatings are designed to reduce drag between carpet backings and the pad. We recommend the use of these type pads with LuxuryBac. Exposed scrim pads have a natural tendency to grab softer backing systems and their use can result in pad wrinkles.
- Emphasize caution when securing carpet pad using a staple hammer.

 Too much force can cause staples to penetrate the carpet pad and not hold it firmly in place. Use less force when using a staple hammer, use an electric stapler to secure the pad, or use pad adhesive. Pad adhesive control pad movement more than stapling.

LuxuryBac is no doubt new technology, and new technology typically does mean "different". However, LuxuryBac technology was based on the development of a backing system that would be installer friendly. This included considerations for being able to rely on old school, long-standing, proven and published fundamental standards of installation to make LuxuryBac trouble free, easy and convenient to install.

Trained and certified installers will quickly recognize that the recommendations listed here are in fact not unique, and are instead common-sense procedures they put into their installation efforts every day. They also know that by complying with these installation standards they too are taking steps in the right direction.