Installation & Floor Preparation Instructions

Flex-Aire® Modular RS®

General Notes
These installation instructions are general and are not intended to be applicable for all sub-floor conditions. If you have any questions concerning the proper installation (or use) of any Tarkett products, please contact Tarkett at 800-248-2878 and follow the prompts for technical support. All products should be inspected for dye lot, style, color, size, quality, and shipping damage prior to installation and should not be installed if any irregularities are observed. **It is solely the responsibility of the installation contractor to ensure that the sub-floor is properly prepared prior to installation.**

Installer Certification
Tarkett requires that all installers be certified prior to performing the installation of modular products on actual jobsites. Contact your local Tarkett representative for more information on installer certification.

Site Requirements
Tarkett modular products are intended for indoor installations on dry, properly prepared sub-floors. The product is not intended for installation on walls, stairs, ramps, outdoors, or on wet surfaces. **Tarkett is not responsible for product failure of any kind if these floor preparation and installation instructions are not adhered to. Only installation materials approved by Tarkett should be used. Be certain to read and adhere to the shelf life and freeze-thaw stability information that is printed on the label of the installation materials.**

Moisture & pH
Excessive moisture and/or high pH on any sub-floor, especially concrete, can cause product failure. The maximum allowable moisture vapor emission rate (MVER) from the sub-floor is 5.0 pounds, as tested according to ASTM F-1869 (Std. Test method for measuring Moisture Emission Rate of Concrete). The required pH range is 7.0 Min. – 9.0 Max.as tested according to ASTM F-710. The In-Situ/RH (relative humidity) requirement on concrete is not to exceed 90% as tested according to ASTM F-2170 (Std. Test method for measuring Relative Humidity in Concrete). Tarkett requires that at least 1 MVER and 2 RH tests be performed on the initial 1000 sq ft of each project. In addition, a minimum of one test, alternating between MVER and RH, per 1000 sq ft is required for the balance of the project. **When In-Situ RH testing has been eliminated from the test protocol, the Maximum Allowable MVER will revert to 3 lbs/24hr/1,000 sq f**t. Refer to our Technical Services Bulletin "Moisture and pH Testing of Tarkett Products" for specific instructions on test methods, ambient conditions, and other requirements.

Note that moisture vapor emission testing, relative humidity, and pH testing indicate the moisture level and pH of the concrete sub-floor at the time of installation. Both moisture and pH can increase over time. Tarkett is not responsible for product failure resulting from changes to sub floor conditions, including increases in moisture or pH levels, post installation. Experience has shown that more accurate and representative MVER, RH and pH testing results can be achieved when the HVAC system is functioning 24/7 for two weeks prior to installation and the indoor air quality has acclimated to occupancy conditions. In cases where the flooring substrate is light weight concrete, or is a Gypsum based leveling compound used as a topcoat over existing concrete, MVER results are not an accurate means of evaluating the conditions of the flooring substrate; therefore, RH will be the only recognized moisture test method.

PH Testing
Preparing the surface of a concrete slab for pH testing requires the following attention to detail. Make sure the concrete surface is adequately cleaned of any adhesives, primers, curing compounds, surface contaminants, etc. Exercise care not to over clean the surface of the concrete removing the thin layer of carbonation. This can result in higher, non-responsive pH readings. Slightly wet the concrete sub-floor surface with a small amount of distilled water and allow the water to stand for one minute. Apply pH test paper to the wet concrete surface and allow the pH test paper to remain in contact with the wet area for one minute. The pH test paper will change color depending on the pH of the wetted surface and a color scale is provided with the pH test papers for comparison. Note pH test paper commonly supplied in MVER test kits only measures up to a pH of 12 accurately.

Installation of Tarkett products on sub-floor conditions that exceed the specifications and limitations provided in this document will void the applicable limited warranties. Tarkett does not represent or make any express or implied warranties that Tarkett floor covering products will or will not affect, prevent or cure any other moisture or alkalinity-related issues that may arise because of the moisture and alkalinity levels found in the concrete. Tarkett expressly disclaims such express or implied representations or warranties.

Temperature & Humidity
The temperature of the interior environment, including the sub floor should be no lower than 65°F and no higher than 90°F at least 72 hours prior to, during and after the tile installation. All Tarkett products and installation materials should be stored between 65°F and 90°F for at least 48 hours prior to installation. Relative humidity should be no more than 65%.

Floor Inspection
The sub-floor must be structurally sound and dry prior to installation. Any curing chemicals, sealers, finishers or other chemical treatments used on sub floors must be chemically and physically compatible with the Tarkett backing and adhesive systems, or they must be removed, or skim coated with a Portland cement-based product. Chemically abated floors or the use of chemical adhesive removers prior to the application of Tarkett backing and adhesive systems can result in product or installation failures and are not recommended nor warranted. If you have questions concerning the compatibility of specific chemicals with Tarkett backing and adhesive systems, please contact Tarkett at 800-248-2878 and follow the prompts for technical support.

Floor Debris Cleaning
Clean the sub-floor of all excess concrete spots, solid debris or paint spots using suitable scraping methods. Completely remove all wax, dirt, grease, paints, or old adhesives (especially cutback or emulsion). DO NOT use solvents or any other chemical adhesive removers to clean the sub-floor. DO NOT use oil-based or silicone based sweeping compound. Contact Tarkett for specific floor preparation guidelines including installation over cutback or information on general purpose adhesive.

Floor Patching and Leveling
All sub-floors should be level. Concrete sub-floors should be troweled smooth and should conform to the standard specifications as recommended by the Portland Cement Association. The floor should be flat to within 1/8" in 10 feet. Cracks, holes and depressions can be filled using Portland Cement/Latex fortified patching material. Do not install over loose tile (VAT, VCT or others loose existing flooring substrates).

Floor Cleaning
Sweep and vacuum the floor after patching and debris removal. Do not use oil, wax, or silicone based sweeping compound. Make sure all perimeter areas are clean. Smooth, nonporous floors should be damp mopped prior to product installation.

Floor Priming (General)

- All new, or clean, porous, or semi-porous concrete, cement, or plywood surfaces must be primed using Tarkett C-36E floor primer. Conduct multiple porosity tests to determine surface porosity. In addition, all surfaces that have been skim coated or patched using Portland cement or gypsum-based materials must be primed using Tarkett C-36E floor primer.
- Tarkett C-36E floor primer should be applied using a 3/8" short-nap paint roller. Allow the primer to dry completely. The Tarkett C-36E floor primer will turn to a faint light blue tint and will not transfer to the touch when dry.
- Surfaces that are nonporous do not require the use of Tarkett C36-E floor primer. These surfaces must be cleaned as directed in the Floor Cleaning section of this document.

  Allow the primer to dry completely. The bond of the Flex-Aire RS modular product will likely be increased by the presence of any residue of existing adhesive that was not properly removed or encapsulated. This condition may result in a permanent installation.

NOTE: Where existing old adhesive residue(s), other than cutback or emulsion adhesive residue, are present, remove the existing residue(s) down to trace amounts with no adhesive ridges remaining. Then use Tarkett C-56 premium floor primer to cover the remaining residue(s). ***The use of C-56 premium floor primer is not a substitute for the removal of old adhesive residue(s) and proper floor debris cleaning.*** It is a safeguard against bond and/or chemical compatibility problems that can be caused by existing old residual adhesive residue(s).

NOTE: Where existing, old, non-asbestos containing cutback adhesive residue(s) are present, completely remove the cutback adhesive residue(s) from the surface of the substrate. ***A licensed asbestos contractor in accordance with state and federal requirements should perform removal of any asbestos containing cutback adhesive residue(s).*** After removal of the cutback adhesive residue(s), prime the surface using Tarkett C-56 premium floor primer which is only intended to cover small amounts of old cutback adhesive residue(s) that may interfere with the bond of the new floor covering. After the floor has dried completely, install the Tarkett Flex-Aire RS modular product following the Tarkett installation procedures.

Installation
Determine the lay direction of the carpet based on building design and installation efficiencies.

1) Locate the first centerline in the installation area by marking the center point of two opposing, parallel walls. Snap a white (not blue or red) chalk line between the two center marks. Snap a second, perpendicular chalk line at the mid-point of this line (use a 3-4-5-triangle method to make sure the second line is perpendicular to the first. This procedure is very important.
2) Check the distance from each centerline to its parallel wall and determine how many tiles will be required. Shift the line as needed (in a parallel direction) to balance the width of the border tiles (tiles against the wall). Border tiles where possible should not be less than half-tile widths.
3) Directional arrows are printed on the back of all tiles. Determine the "arrow direction" for the installation and make sure all tiles are installed in the same direction (unless a quarter-turn or other installation pattern is required).
4) Tarkett RS tiles are installed by removing the protective plastic membrane from the back of the tile, positioning the tile on the floor as needed and pressing the tile firmly onto the floor.
5) Start from the intersection point in the center of the floor and install the first line of tiles along the first centerline. Install the second line of tiles along the perpendicular centerline. Keep all the tiles exactly on the chalk lines. Fit the tiles snugly next to each other by sliding them into place. DO NOT FORCE THE TILES. DO NOT TRAP FACE YARN BETWEEN OR UNDER TILE EDGES. Press the tiles into place. When the tiles are properly positioned roll with a 75 to 100 lb. roller to assure a positive contact between the tile backing and the sub-floor. Tiles can be removed from the sub-floor at any time for realignment.
6) Continue to install the tiles in a stair-step or pyramid pattern starting from the intersection point. Check to make sure the tiles are properly aligned at the edges during installation.
7) Install border tiles by placing a tile face down exactly on top of the last full line of field tile, keep the arrows pointed in the same direction. This is the *cut tile.* Take another full tile and butt it against the wall allowing it to fall on top of the cut tile. This is the *reference tile*. Score a line on the back of the *cut tile* using the edge of the *reference tile* as a guide. Cut the *cut tile* along the reference line. Do not cut through to the field tile. Install the *cut tile* with the cut edge along the wall. Doorways and other permanent objects can be fitted using this method, by making a pattern or by measuring techniques. Provide transition strips on all exposed tile edges.

Installation Over Raised Access Flooring Systems
Note: Flex-Aire Modular RS is not approved for installation over **metal-faced** raised access flooring systems. This category of installation **requires** the use of TarkettTAPE for Flex-Aire Modular Non-RS. There are no restrictions on installing Flex-Aire Modular RS over raised access flooring systems of types other than metal-faced.

When installing over raised access flooring systems, the starting installation grid should always overlap the access panel joints. Installing the modular carpet tiles so that they are flush with the panels will create more visible tile seams, and any movement of the panels that may occur because of the panels not being securely in place may adversely affect the tile edges.

Other
For installation over substrates not mentioned here, information on exposed edges, air pockets, repairs, more detailed installation instructions, and/or other installation information, please contact Tarkett at 800-248-2878 and follow the prompts for technical support.

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