**Health hints**

**Sneezing, Wheezing? Maybe It’s Your Floor**

(NAPS)—When you get down to it, you can combat asthma. According to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, more than 17 million Americans have asthma, and approximately 40 million have allergies. Asthma is the leading cause of hospitalization in children and teens; the number of children with asthma has more than doubled between 1980 and 1995.

If your floors are carpeted, they’re probably causing it. In fact, allergists have long recommended against having carpeting in homes that have patients with allergies or respiratory disorders.

First, consider keeping the carpet. dust mites. Each step on your carpet can propel small clouds into the air that cause sneezing, wheezing and other reactions. Carpet can be treated for dust mites, but not permanently.

Second, pet dander in carpet fibers can reach “breathing” levels for those allergic to it; the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) reports it can stay in carpets for up to six weeks.

Third, caustic chemicals “off-gas” from carpet fibers, its adhesive and its stain-resistant finishes, according to the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. Petrolatum-based adhesives add that even vinyl flooring can contain a host of “off-gas” substances—including phthalate, lead, cadmium and dioxins—not great news for allergy suffers.

NIAID recommends that those with dust mite allergies remove carpet—up to 99 percent of the mites—room, according to the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology. But then what? Interestingly enough, a material that’s been called Marmoleum, can help people, particularly those with allergies or asthma, feel good in their homes,” says Dennis Darragh, president and general manager of Forbo Marmoleum North America. “It has great design capability, with customization options and over 100 colors, as well as a positive effect on the environment. We recently introduced our Clean Living Program, to reinforce Marmoleum’s benefits with people who desperately need it for healthy reasons. It’s a great choice—to create healthier, cleaner, good-looking environments benefitting people and planet.

If you have allergies, asthma or other respiratory ailments, lino- moleum could be an easy, stylish way to feel better in your home. To learn more about Marmoleum, call 1-866-MARMOL-EUM or visit themarmoleumstore.com.

**Asphalt Roofing Is Tops**

(NAPS)—The right choice for your roof can keep you from hit- ting the ceiling when you see your heating and home-repair bills. Asphalt shingles are the most widely used roofing material in North America, topping four out of five homes, is ver- satile, affordable and best of all, eco- nomical. It’s asphalt. Any style, any shape, any season, asphalt can work for your roofing needs.

Over 12.5 billion square feet of asphalt shingles—enough to cover more than five million homes—are manufactured annually. Asphalt shingles come in the broadest array of colors, shapes and textures available, and can affordably match almost every type of architectural design and achieve virtually any desired effect.

Some of the benefits of asphalt shingles include:

- **Product Performance**—Asphalt performs well, even in extreme temperatures and in areas where wind, water and ice are a concern.
- **Affordability**—Mass pro- duction and the relatively low application cost of asphalt shing- les can provide consumers with an affordable choice when matched with other roofing materials to match.
- **Durability**—Asphalt shin- gles may be the longest-lasting roofing material you can buy for your home.

Your roofing contractor can tell you what type of asphalt shingles are best for you. For more information on the benefits of asphalt, go to www.asphaltroofing.org.

**Linoleum can be a decorative flooring option for people with allergies and asthma.**

**Asphalt shingles perform well,** according to a Princeton Survey Research Associates report, three-fourths of employees believe their on-the-job stress now is greater than a generation ago. Some of the causes of stress in the workplace---such as tight deadlines or a demanding boss---may be beyond your control. But then what? Interestingly enough, something you can do about the way certain features of the modern workplace---your computer and overhead lighting---con- tribute to overall stress. When it comes to eyestrain and headaches, taking simple eye precautions can make a big difference at the end of the workday.

**Flaring Errors**

According to a recent poll, nearly seven out of ten Americans use a computer, and office use of the computer in the workplace will inevitably rise. Many people may not realize is that at the end of a long day in front of a com- puter screen or beneath overhead lighting, the common office set-ups can lead to tired eyes. Positioning your computer screen adjacent to the window and away from your computer screen perpendicu- lar to the window and away from the computer to overhead lighting—con- tribute to overall stress. When it comes to eyestrain and headaches, taking simple eye precautions can make a big difference at the end of the workday.

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