

Dear Strata Council and / or Home Owner Association:

Re: STC / IIC Sound Deadening Ratings

In the 1990s, new Laminate and Engineered Hardwood products emerged, which had a hard loud surface and core, allowing sound to transfer, and when stretched over a cheap foam it created a drum effect that amplified sounds. To stop this denser, vibration absorbing foams were created.

Carpet and Vinyl were never tested or rated for sound deadening because they are soft surfaces that do not create or conduct sound. Thin inexpensive vinyl floors are installed throughout North America without concern and do not require sound deadening foams.

Our 5mm thick vinyl planks are used in renovations and new construction of condos everywhere.

STC (Sound Transmission Class) rates airborne sound transmission, for example, speech, TV and dog barking. IIC (Impact Insulation Class) tests the ability to block impact sounds on the floor, such as footsteps and dropped items. Canadian and American Building Codes require a STC / IIC rating of 50.

There are different test parameters or criteria called ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials) that use varying building components such as thickness and types of cement, drop ceilings and insulation, which are the primary factors in the overall number. The sound deadening numbers have become confusing in recent years due to some importers using techniques that inflate ratings within unrealistic test conditions.

Our products are engineered to meet the American and Canadian building codes in architectural testing laboratories and reassessed with comparative testing in the field amongst real life construction. As a result of this, under ASTM E90 and E492 guidelines, we are able to provide realistic and accurate readings which have produced minimum sound ratings of 52 IIC and 61 STC without the need to fabricate test facility construction to gain better results. In addition, we are pleased to be able to publish even higher ratings with the inclusion of an underlayment such as cork which will increase our numbers between 9 to 14 points. For further details about such results, please refer to your area representative who will be pleased to discuss both IIC and STC ratings in greater detail.

Strata Councils and homeowners associations struggle to find a simple rule to apply in a world where importers have created confusion by using conflicting protocols, including the industries inability to present different products on individual merits.

A thick, warm quiet floor does not require a sound deadening foam because it does not create the sharp sounds of a hard surface and does not have the solid core that easily transmits that sound. Try hitting your key against a laminate or ceramic, then onto our thick vinyl planks.

Please stop and look at the thin vinyl floors normally installed in most condo buildings and realize that the rules for laminate or other hard surface and solid core flooring do not apply to our thick, rubber like, luxury vinyl tiles and planks.

For more information or to find a dealer near you, check out our website www.xlflooring.ca.