



TECHNICAL BULLETIN #13

CONTRACT WARRANTIES

If You Don't Know This - You Will Have ZERO Warranty

Parties contemplating purchasing materials (timber) from one party, labour (installation) from another party and sanding and finishing processes from another party **should be aware** that they effectively have **zero warranty**, on the main foundations of the interior of their home, being their floors.

At litigation, there is a long history of continual argument between the parties, all of whom say **"it's not my fault"** that was someone else's responsibility and invariably, it is the home owner who is the one, who is ultimately left holding the can.

With such an important (foundational) part of your home, best advice is, to **secure a contract with one party** who will accept **full responsibility** for everything, from the sub floor onwards, so as to encompass the **"whole"** of the wood floor installation.

Parties are advised that **"good trade practice"** requires that all **site finished** wood floors should stand for a **minimum** of 7 - 10 days to **"settle"**, after installation, and before sanding and finishing procedures commence, regardless of prior **"acclimatisation"**, if undertaken.

Also, be aware, that **rapid application** of coats, without proper **"curing"** between successive coats will **not** deliver the same **"performance"** that is achievable when all coats are properly and **"fully cured"**.

Regardless of what manufacturers want to publish on their cans for "marketing" reasons, it must be understood that **all** site finished coatings should be regarded as **"green"** until **fully cured** and full curing of all site finished coatings should be regarded as a **minimum** of 4 weeks.

Alpine climates **and** very humid weather may **extend** these **minimum** periods.

Protection:

It is **essential** that all parties know and understand the importance that **no wood floor** should ever be covered with plastic sheeting as it will cause the floor to "sweat" and may cause them to distort.

Placement of Furniture:

In renovation work, where there is a great need to return furniture to a residence as soon as possible.

After the resurfacing of wood floors, furniture may be carefully **“placed”** on the floor (not dragged) so long as it has purpose made, good quality, **felt floor protectors** fitted, but not within the first 48 hours after the application of final coats.

Note:

Most good “floor protectors” are manufactured in either **Sweden** or **Canada**.

Maintenance:

People with rental properties that contain wooden floors are encouraged to provide their tenants with appropriate advice on **“good maintenance”** of their wood floors.

- A. You do not **“wash”** any wood floor system.
- B. If using a normal “string” mop, it must be a **“well wrung out mop”**, and should not allow **“free water”** to be mopped onto the floor. Parties should be aware that where people might “claim” that they do not “wash” or “wet mop” their floors, the floor itself will tell its own story in that edges will “darken” and go “grey” in colour and may lead to “cupping” or “curling” of boards in extreme situations.
- C. The **National Wood Flooring Association of Australia (NWFAA)**, encourages contractors to supply every client with an **Electrostatic Dust Control Mop** which is used completely **“dry”** and is used for 97% of floor maintenance.
- D. Sand and grit require a vacuum cleaner and / or soft broom.
- E. All residents living near beach side suburbs need to understand that sand under footwear is just like using sandpaper on a wood floor system.
- F. **NWFAA** recommends that land lords encourage responsible tenants in three (3) ways, to “look after” the wood floors that you are providing.
 - 1) Provide “written” advice as to **maintenance** as set out above.
 - 2) Provide a photographic record of the state of your floors at the time of tenancy.
 - 3) Buy a collection of quality **“floor protectors”** of your choice (various sizes) and **give these** to your tenant for their use to **protect** your property.
 - 4) Provide them with an **electrostatic dust control mop** which is used completely **dry** and is an absolute boom for anyone with allergy / asthma suffers.

These items, with a professionally crafted covering letter, will convey to your tenants:-

- That you care for them as a tenant.
- That you are drawing their attention to the quality of the floor coverings that you are providing and that you are documenting your on-going interest that they might care for your assets using the tools, with which you are providing them.

Many of our people report excellent feed-back from the employment of these practices, which do **encourage** people to both **appreciate** and to **care for** quality wood floor finishes in residential situations.

Laminate Acoustical Plank Flooring:

Residential tenancy situations where extreme wear and tear are required, should give consideration to “*High Quality*” **EUROPEAN** Laminate floors which have been found to be “almost” indestructible.

Here, I must emphasise, there is a **vast** difference between “Chinese” laminates and “EUROPEAN” laminate floors and the adage “that **one gets only what one pays for**”, has never been more true!

For a person who has spent most of his professional career installing solid, up-market wood floors, to have a kind word to say about **any** laminate floor, is worthy of note.

However, we are talking about **EUROPEAN** Laminate from manufacturers who also manufacture laminate floors suitable for installation in **bathrooms!**

Be advised, if you are going to do a job, **do it right**, or otherwise install carpet / vinyl / or tiles.