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July 19th, 2010



**FloorScore® vs. GREENGUARD, FSC® vs. SFI® – more details about this week's Natural Interiors® TV**

Forest Steward, you rock!

But it might be time to change your thinking. The FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certification you represent in the *July 19, 2010 episode of Natural Interiors® TV* is the true, independent third-party certification we have all come to rely on. Yes, the U.S. Green Building Council is now considering whether to also rely on SFI (Sustainable Forestry Initiative) in determining what products get credits for being sustainably harvested.

Are you going to make yourself ill over a little competition?

Did you pay attention to GREENGUARD during the video? He represents a true, third-party certifier, and he competes daily with FloorScore.® But it doesn't look like GREENGUARD is losing any sleep.

GREENGUARD and FloorScore® certifications set limits on chemical emissions from hard-surface flooring to promote healthful indoor-air quality. Many people consider FloorScore® to be a second-party certification because it was started by the Resilient Floor Covering Institute — a flooring industry trade association. But SCS (Scientific Certification Systems) — a well-known third-party certifier — reviews the testing and issues certification under the program.

The GREENGUARD certification program, overseen by the GREENGUARD Environmental Institute, enforces emission limits on 364 VOCs (Volatile Organic Compounds). It also enforces emission limits on the total sum of VOCs that can off-gas from a product. GREENGUARD Certification requires this total VOC limit because health science cannot keep up with the number of new chemical compounds introduced into the marketplace every day.

For the FloorScore® certification program, the Resilient Floor Covering Institute chose California's section 01350 specifications, which set limits for 38 VOCs. They did this with the belief that it was the best health-based standard available. The certification was then

designed and is conducted by SCS, which commends GREENGUARD for including more VOCs but is confident that FloorScore® is as third-party as it gets.

The GREENGUARD Environmental Institute counters that the compounds they regulate are more appropriate for resilient flooring, and that their GREENGUARD Children & Schools Certification is more stringent than section 01350.

Independent, third-party oversight like the GREENGUARD Environmental Institute's always gets my vote. But with SCS – not the Resilient Floor Covering Institute – overseeing the FloorScore® program, FloorScore® gains credibility. In addition, more certifications mean that more manufacturers put their products through a “green” testing process, which is better for human health and the planet's health.

Forest Steward, you just need to be more like GREENGUARD. Focus on what sets you apart from SFI, and when the U.S. Green Building Council makes its decision, we can go over those attributes in another video. The hard-core “green” consumer will always want you.

So buck up!

– Nancy Kibbee

**Editor & Natural Interiors® TV Producer**

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