

North American Tile EPD draft report announced at Coverings 2014

Ceramic tile shows a lower 60-year environmental footprint across all five major impact categories than any other floor covering

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Specifiers and other building design and construction industry professionals seeking sustainable flooring options can now look to the North American Tile Environmental Product Declaration (EPD) to evaluate and understand the tile's environmental footprint.

An EPD is a report that quantifies the environmental impacts of a product throughout its lifecycle. It tells a product's complete environmental story in a standardized format across five environmental impact categories: carbon footprint, resource depletion, smog formation potential, ozone depletion potential, and eutrophication potential. In the case of tile, this standardized format is consistent with that of carpet, resilient, laminate, and wood flooring products. Similar in concept to nutrition reporting, this harmonized reporting allows for practical and efficient comparisons within the category of flooring.

So, just what is the North American Tile EPD? A draft report which contains a comprehensive analysis of over 95% of the ceramic tile produced in North America was announced at Coverings 2014. Based on a life cycle assessment (LCA) performed independently by PE INTERNATIONAL, this draft report has been submitted to UL ENVIRONMENT for peer review and certification. With

the document soon to be registered, the industry will have an EPD for generic North American-made tile.

According to the draft report, **ceramic tile shows a lower 60-year environmental footprint across all five major impact categories than every other floor covering with a registered EPD, including carpet and resilient.** This is exciting news for the industry, especially when considering that green building requirements are trending toward product-selection criteria based on whole-building LCA evaluations. Additionally, tiles made by the manufacturers whose products and operations were evaluated for the composite EPD will contribute toward points in LEED, Green Globes, ICC-700, ASHRAE 189.1 and future versions of the International Green Construction Code. Furthermore, products from companies that submitted data to the composite study will qualify for additional points if their product-specific environmental footprint is proven to be lower than industry average.

With the finalization and pending certification of the North American Tile EPD, the next chapter in specifying sustainable tile products is here. The industry now has the ability to provide unprecedented levels of environmental reporting, and manufacturers have

a reference point to which they can continuously assess the sustainability of their products. When coupled with Green Squared® certification, the emergence of EPDs throughout the industry provides design professionals with a complete toolset of facts and performance-based metrics from which sustainable product choices can be made.



TCNA's Eric Astrachan announces the North American Tile EPD at a Coverings press conference, calling it a "product nutrition label" for tile that reflects the tile's environmental impact based on international standards, derived from a 60-year lifecycle assessment performed independently by PE INTERNATIONAL. Manufacturers participating in the EPD include: Arto, Crossville, Daltile, American Marazzi, FlorimUSA, Florida Tile, Interceramic, Ironrock, Porcelanite/Lamosa, Quarry Tile Company, StonePeak Ceramics, and Vitromex.

