

[Name]

[date]

Summary Sheet

Carpet: A Cradle to Grave Analysis

Although carpet can be found in most homes today, many consumers are not aware of the dangers associated with this product, both physically and environmentally. However, the dangers of carpeting are not limited to the carpet itself; chemicals used to treat carpets against stains and flammability can release deadly toxins into your home's atmosphere for many years after installation. The federal government should require more complete labeling of the carpet industry to educate consumers about the recycled content, recyclability, and health effects of using this product in their homes.

- Carpet started being manufactured in the 1950s
- 1957, DuPont invents the first nylon fibers
- 70% of American floors are covered by carpet
- The amount of carpet purchased in 1993 would cover 40% of Rhode Island
- Manufacturing Process:
 - Fibers are dyed in water or through an extrusion process
 - Looped fibers are stitched into a polypropylene backing
 - Styrene butadiene latex (SB latex), an adhesive, is applied to backing
- Manufacturing companies are assessed each year by the American National Standards Institute
 - Impact on public health and the environment
 - Energy and energy efficiency
 - Bio-based or recycled materials
 - Manufacturing
 - Reclamation and end-of-life management
- Health effects
 - After installation, the carpet out-gases for 24 hours
 - Releases over 200 chemicals
 - Long-term effects not known
 - Carpets act as air filters, trapping pollutants to later be released into the air during vacuuming
- Alternatives to carpet
 - Hardwood, tile, cork, marmoleum
 - Carpets made from jute, hemp, and wool
- Recyclability
 - 2003: Over 5 billion pounds dumped in landfills
 - To date: 500 million pounds recycled
 - Costs twenty-five cents to \$1.25 per square foot to recycle
 - Ways to reuse carpet: concrete reinforcement, plastic lumber, clean coal
- Social Issues
 - Employment of illegal Hispanic workers

- Birnbaum, Linda. "Cats as Canaries." *The Environmentalist* Oct 2007: 10.
- "Frequently Asked Questions." CARE. *Carpet America Recovery Effort*. 12 May 2009
<<http://www.carpetrecovery.org/faqs.php>>.
- "Carpeting, Indoor Air Quality, and the Environment ." *Environmental Building News* 01 Nov 1994.
- "Carpet Information: Dangers of Wall to Wall Carpeting." *one earth one design*. 2007.
1Earth 1Design, LLC. 18 Mar 2009
<<http://www.1earth1design.com/design/information/carpet/>>.
- "Carpet Risk." *IEA*. 2008. Institute for Environmental Assessment, Inc. . 18 Mar 2009
<<http://www.ieainstitute.com/kb/carpet-risk.cfm>>.
- Fischler, Marcelle. "Some Just See Old Carpet. These Two See a Golden Opportunity." *New York Times* 20 Apr 2008: A5.
- "Frequently Asked Questions." CRI. *The Carpet and Rug Institute*. 10 May 2009
<<http://www.carpet-rug.org/about-cri/what-is-cri/frequently-asked-questions.cfm#24>>.
- "Greening Your Purchase of Carpet: A Guide for Federal Purchasers." Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP). 07 Nov 2007. *Environmental Protection Agency*. 18 Mar 2009 <<http://www.epa.gov/epp/pubs/carpets2.htm>>.
- Mettile, Jersey. "Carpets: The Dangers Right Underneath Your Feet." *Associated Content* 10 Sep 2008 18 Mar 2009
<http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/988334/carpets_the_dangers_right_underneath.html?cat=5>.
- "New Standard for 'Green' Carpet." *Industrial Engineer* Feb 2008: 13.
- Randall, Patton L. "Carpet Industry: Overview." *The New Georgia Encyclopedia*. 2003.
University of Georgia Press. 18 Mar 2009
<<http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-1017>>.
- Weschler, Charles J. "Changes in indoor pollutants since the 1950s." *Atmospheric Environment* 43(2009): 153-169.