

## THINGS TO PONDER



**T**he start of a New Year, especially this year, brings many financial and business challenges both new and old for us to face. I'm not going to present all the negatives here, I'm going to write about the posi-

tives and how things relate to our floor covering market. The housing market is booming, hundreds of new houses, condominiums, and townhomes are being built in record numbers. BC has the highest economic growth of any province in Canada.

Vancouver (and area) is always at the top of lists of best places in the world to live, many people will continue to move here from other parts of Canada. Over 200,000 people immigrate to Canada annually from all over the world. Many of these people settle in BC. Our

beauty, climate, resources and way of life will forever make BC a great place to call home.

With the facts I point out here, there will be a good long term growth for floor coverings. Commercial buildings, offices, stores, warehouses, hospitals and schools will continue to use vast amounts of flooring (new and upgraded).

Many homeowners are remodeling, updating, downsizing and refurbishing. The large equity and higher values in their homes people have now resulted in many homeowners getting reverse mortgages, low interest loans and lines of credit to buy cottages, investment properties, rental homes or even to help their children buy a home. Look into the BC Government Program for deferring your taxes, see if it works for you. Get your money working for you. The housing market is not going to crash. It may fluctuate as real estate always has but it remains one of the best long

term investment you can make.

Even with the huge increase in house prices, sales have not slowed down. Bidding wars on houses selling over the list price and very quickly, are common.

There was a time when a lot of low end flooring was used in many homes and projects. The market has changed for the good. Project and homes are much more design oriented, want higher quality products and are prepared to invest a lot of money to get it. Check out the flooring going into new homes, offices, commercial projects, and hotels. It's not low end any more.

Think positively, think creatively, there's a lot of money and a lot of floor covering business out there.

Good selling to all.

Chris Bland  
 President

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## BCFCA Committee Chairs for 2015

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# 'THE EXPERT SERIES'

with Allan Sieban of Vintage Hardwood Floors



We welcome Allan Sieban, Account Manager for Vintage Hardwood Floors, to 'The Expert Series' hot seat to field a

few questions and give us the benefit of his experience in the ever-changing and challenging industry of hardwood flooring.

Allan began his career in this industry at MacMillan Bloedel Building Materials in 1990, moving to Satin Finish Hardwood Flooring for several years before taking on his current role with Vintage Hardwood Flooring (Boa-Franc). His 26 years in the industry has been spent connecting with flooring dealerships across the province of BC, teaching and supporting his customer base along the way. This has taught him a thing or two about hardwood flooring and earned him a reputation as an expert in his field, hence our invitation to sit him in our hot seat.

**Q:** What significant trends have you noticed in the last 3 years and where is hardwood flooring headed?

**AS:** More and more synthetic wood products such as Luxury Vinyl Tile and Laminate flooring products are displacing real wood floor purchases for several reasons – the main ones being durability, ease of installation and maintenance. This is especially noticeable in the multi-family and condo markets. Considering the number of tenanted properties or condos purchased as flip investments, you can see why cheaper more durable products are being chosen over traditional hardwood.

For the future, real wood will continue to appeal to a more traditional audience and long term homeowners who appreciate the natural characteristics of wood and therefore can experience the value.

**Q:** How have customers changed over the years (homeowners and flooring contractors)?

**AS:** Homeowners have many more resources when researching larger purchases like wood floors - websites, social media, Google searches. To the homeowner, I say 'buyer

beware'. Unless you really understand what you're buying, a little information can get you in over your head. Talk to a dealer who specializes in the hardwood field. Buying the product from an auction or big box store at half price, then having someone else install, is a recipe for disaster. End-users also have the perceived advantage of a saturated market when choosing specific, real brands versus phantom brands that tend to be 'here today and gone tomorrow'.

I see many flooring contractors (dealers) that have allowed too many brands onto their showroom floors in an attempt to be everything to everyone. More focus needs to be spent on reducing product offerings and honing in on the quality attributes of the selected brands, training your sales staff to sell those programs and strengthening dealer/distributor relationships. Less is more!

**Q:** What significant product developments have you seen in recent years regarding finish, engineered flooring and solid wood flooring?

**AS: Finish.** There has been a surge in natural, UV oils and lower glossed finishes coming into the market. With this change comes the challenge of training sales people

both experienced and new. Sales professionals need to understand the difference between natural, UV oiled products and oxidative oiled finishes and the different maintenance procedures.

**Engineered flooring.** Engineered hardwood plank platforms have been dubiously replicated by the mass influx of overseas imports. To the untrained eye, many forgeries cannot be noticed. It's important to understand the difference between platforms, the stability of the wood species used, the adhesives, and the production process. These things affect price and long-term floor performance - important considerations for a customer who wants their floor to last a lifetime.

**Solid wood flooring.** Sadly, solid wood has lost its appeal. The demand for moisture durability has trumped the value a solid wood floor. In addition, new construction practices have seen the proliferation of concrete sub floors in multiunit developments and radiant heated concrete in single-family homes. For these subfloors, solid hardwood has its limitations.

Fifteen years ago in the BC market, solid wood was the preferred choice. Back then, builders and homeowners frowned on engineered hardwood floors. Oh how things have changed!

**Q:** How is the weak Canadian dollar affecting your business?

**AS:** All commodity and value-added wood purchases are based on the US dollar the world over. Domestic species such as Oak, Walnut, Hickory and Maple are mostly harvested from US soil. Our weakened Canadian dollar only tips the scale in the direction of higher production costs, which get passed on to the consumer.

**Q:** What are the three most common complaints you have to deal with?

**AS:** **#1, Moisture.** The west coast is a rain forest. Based on that, we see a lot of shrinkage and expansion issues.

**#2, Installation-related problems.** This is mostly due to inexperience and not following manufacturers' installation guidelines. My number one piece of advice - check site conditions before delivering the hardwood to site.

**#3, Unrealistic customer expectations.**

The role of the salesperson is, in part, to keep the customer's feet on the ground and guide them through the whole process of installation.

**Q:** What can be done to avoid these problems?

**AS:** Simple, better and frequent education for dealer and distribution representatives. Installers also have to be better equipped with proper training (NWFA training is now available at the Floor Layer's Training Center in Delta, BC). Installers need to be accountable. On a positive note, I have experienced more and more installers halting installation and contacting the product supplier if they feel a potential problem is looming.

**Q:** What do you say about hardwood in the kitchen?

**AS:** I say, go for it! Hardwood is a perfect floor for kitchens. Make sure the homeowner is aware of the proper maintenance practices and understands the limitations of wood. Properly done, the overall look is way more pleasing to the eye than if you stop the hardwood short and fill it in with ceramic tile.

**Q:** Where do you see the industry in 10 years?

**AS:** Ten years ago prefinished flooring was mostly 4' long and 3 to 5" wide. Today mostly 6' long and 7" wide. In ten years, I would guess longer and wider still.

One thing is for sure, wood flooring is not going away any time soon. There is an overwhelming abundance of raw material available as trees are being properly and successfully farmed for regrowth. As the next generation of homebuyers enter the market, hardwood flooring desirability and demand will continue to grow.

In general the consumer's lifestyle will continue to be a deciding factor when choosing a wood floor and sales people will remain as the influencers of the choices made. This is why direct education to end-users by the people who bring the products to market is so important.

Thank you Allan, for your time and a great Q and A session! ♦

## OUR WEBSITE IS WORKING FOR YOU!

As a business in today's internet overload, getting noticed is not easy. This is another area where the BCFCa can support you and get you site hits. Members of the BCFCa get a free listing on the [www.bcfc.ca](http://www.bcfc.ca) website which puts you on search engine radars.

Search engines such as Google, Bing, Yahoo prefer sites with lots of related industry links, regular updated content such as blogs and articles and an active presence on social media sites all of which the BCFCa's attention. As a result we track our website visitors and know month to month how much traffic we experience, what is searched for and who the referring sites are.



In January we had an average of 552 unique visitors per week and 7,385 page views per week.

### What should you do:

- As a member make sure your site links to ours.
- Include a small BCFCa logo icon at the bottom of your home page or in the footer section of your site with a built in link to [www.bcfc.ca](http://www.bcfc.ca) and that we have a link back to you, found on our membership directory list where your listing is at [www.bcfc.ca/membership-directory.html](http://www.bcfc.ca/membership-directory.html)
- Like us on Facebook
- Follow us on LinkedIn
- Follow us on Twitter
- Like or comment on our blog

Search engines watch for this type of interaction and it raises your SEO (Search Engine Optimization). ♦

# Bay Resource Group Inc.

SPECIALTY FLOORING PRODUCTS

*Innovative Flooring with a Clean Footprint*



## NEW PRODUCTS, NEW PRICES, NEW WEBSITE AND NEW LOCATION!

**Harbinger** — We have retained your favorites and the design team **launched 26 brand new SKU's** by sourcing new proprietary films ensuring the line maintains trend forward marketability. Product changes include larger formats in 12"x36" and 9"x60" while still offering the ever popular 6"x36", 7"x48" and 12"x24" formats. All of the glue down products are now produced in 3mm thickness so you can easily mix and match SKU's. For those areas that you need to transition to tile or carpet — **we have matching PVC nosing's, t-mouldings, and reducers — in every SKU!**

We are still able to keep our **prices very competitive!** We have **dropped the price** in the Signature, Craftsman and No Stick Series. All glue down products now come with GridLoc — a Fiberglass mesh core providing additional dimensional stability. For Click we have added a Composite Core increasing the rigidity and retaining the Patented Valinge 5G locking system. Acoustic Click also has an attached cork backing eliminating the need for underlay and delivering superior IIC and STC ratings of 67. Don't be fooled by generic statements— we can provide your customers with **the tests to prove the construction, quality and performance.**

**No Stick Shurlock** — with **13 SKU's** this 5mm perimeter glue looselay product has a proprietary backing which creates an acoustical air barrier achieving IIC 67 and STC 67. Backed by the **Harbinger 20 year Commercial and Lifetime Residential Warranty** — this product is your solution to installation over many existing hard surfaces.

**Dinoflex** — we are proud to represent this BC manufacturer of recycled rubber products for over two decades! Specializing in premium quality rubber flooring Dinoflex provides solutions for architects, designers and builders that are **cost effective and environmentally friendly** and richly coloured flooring suitable for a most sport and commercial applications and customizable for intricate logos. Making the world a more liveable place by **fully qualifying for all levels of LEED certification.**

**Wayflor** — **the carpet tile of the future** — we are the Canadian distributor of this luxury woven vinyl flooring offering the texture of a textile without the issues of fiber discolouration, odour and wear — **responds like luxury vinyl tile for long wear, durability and style.** The technology comes from woven textiles used in outdoor patio, awnings, luggage, and window shades making it UV resistant. Stocked in trendy patterns available in rolls and tiles.

Phthalates are not good for anyone and are banned by many government agencies and regulatory bodies yet continue to be sold to the consumer. Our products have been phthalate free for over 10 years and we guarantee they continue to be **phthalate, phenol and heavy metal free** ensuring the highest indoor air quality far exceeding Floor Score or LEED standards.

**We moved!** With over double the capacity of our current warehouses enabling us to stock even more product to meet the day to day needs of you and your customers.

**Go to [www.harbingerfloors.com](http://www.harbingerfloors.com) or call your rep to see all the new offerings.**

# HARDWOOD FLOORS NEED ROOM TO EXPAND



Time after time we are called out to inspect newly installed hardwood floors that are squeaking and/or not laying down flat. Time after time our inspectors deliver the same conclusion 'The specified expansion gap did not meet the manufacturer's requirements'.

Before we look at some reasons for this, it is important to understand that in order to guarantee success of a wood floor it must be allowed to expand and contract naturally through the four-season cycle. Why? Because wood is hygroscopic - which means it will absorb, hold and then release moisture over time depending on moisture levels in the surrounding environment. Changing relative humidity (RH) and temperature levels influence the shape and size of wood flooring on a daily, even hourly basis. Without the ability to expand and contract freely, the risk is that your wood flooring will bind against an obstruction causing squeaking, lifting and joint stress.

Wood flooring products are dried in a kiln at the factory, warehoused, shipped across deserts and oceans by truck, or in steel containers in the heat of the summer and cold of the winter, eventually arriving at the place of installation. This all takes place with the wood flooring moisture content fluctuating between 6 - 9%. At the final destination, the home, installation temperature should be approximately 20c (70f) and the RH between 35 - 55%. Once acclimated to correct site conditions, installation can begin. These temperature and relative humidity conditions should be maintained if movement is to be minimized after installation. If these levels don't change the wood flooring won't change. But as we all know, temperature and RH levels do change...a lot...and so care should be taken when planning delivery times and recording moisture and humidity levels on site.

All of this is common knowledge for hardwood floor installers and yet we still see a high incidence of problems related to inadequate expansion gaps.

## Here are a few examples of problems we see:

- Correct expansion gap, wrong moisture level. Excess moisture on site will be absorbed by the wood flooring causing more expansion

than the recommended gap size can handle. Small amounts of moisture vapor can cause huge problems. Test the site conditions and record the results for future reference.

NFCA Acceptable conditions are: Ambient Relative Humidity between 35 and 55%. Temperature between 18 and 30c. Sub-floor moisture content at 12% for plywood, 3lb MVER (Moisture Vapor Emission Rate) for concrete sub-floors.

A rule of thumb is: no more than a 4% moisture difference between hardwood flooring and sub-floor.

Do not deliver the wood flooring to site until these or manufacturer's recommended site conditions exist.

- The sub-floor is tested dry but the space below ( maybe a crawl space) has excess moisture. 'As below, so above', moisture will be absorbed by the driest material on site, which is often the hardwood flooring, until equilibrium is achieved. Check that all areas around the installation area are dry to specification.
- Spacers (for a floating floor) are designed to hold the starter row of flooring out from the wall, creating and holding the correct expansion gap during the first stage of installation. Often the practice of pinning the first row into place (on wood sub-floors) is used instead of spacers to save time. Pinning the first row into place prevents natural expansion and contraction and voids the manufacturers warranty.
- Installation of fixed items by another trade, such as stair railings, takes place after the floor is installed. Such items are anchored to the sub-floor through the floor covering preventing natural movement.
- Overlap transitions, such as door thresholds and expansion joints are often glued into place with too much adhesive. The excess adhesive squeezes out inadvertently bonding the transition, flooring and sub-floor together. This prevents natural floor expansion and contraction. Care should be taken

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## 2016 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### JUNE 2 – GOLF TOURNAMENT

Surrey Golf Club

### JUNE 8 – AGM

BC Farm Museum, Fort Langley

### JULY 7 – MEMBER APPRECIATION

#### BREAKFAST

Shannon Hall, Cloverdale

### AUG 12-13 (TBA) –

#### SLO-PITCH TOURNAMENT

Solfball City, South Surrey

### OCTOBER 18 – FLOORING EXPO &

#### INSTALLERS CONVENTION

Langley, Coast Hotel

### OCTOBER 20 – PUMPKIN PATCH

Port Kells Nursery

### OCTOBER 21 – NIGHT @ THE RACES

Elements Casino, formerly Fraser Downs

### DECEMBER 8 – CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

Sandman Signature Hotel, Langley

### DECEMBER 10 – SKATE WITH SANTA

Langley Events Centre

## 2016 EDUCATION CALENDAR

Held at BCFA Office

### APRIL 27 – MS POWERPOINT

### MAY 4 – MS WORD

### MAY 11 – MS EXCEL LEVEL 1

### MAY 18 – MS EXCEL LEVEL 2

### MAY 25 – MS EXCEL LEVEL 3

### SEPTEMBER 21 – HARDWOOD SEMINAR

For more information or registration forms please visit [www.bcfca.com](http://www.bcfca.com) or call the office at 604-881-4944.

# 5 KEY REASONS RESILIENT AND WOOD FLOOR INSTALLATIONS FAIL AND HOW TO PREVENT THEM

## 1. SUBSTRATE MOISTURE



✗ Resilient and wood flooring systems are extremely sensitive to moisture vapor emissions and hydrostatic pressure. Often the necessary tests designed to detect substrate moisture are not taken properly or not taken at all.

✓ Concrete slab dry times vary greatly based on slab thickness, concrete mix and weather conditions. A new 6" slab can take 8 months or more to become dry enough for many flooring products. Moisture testing is the only way to be sure the substrate is dry enough to begin installing. Relative Humidity Testing (ASTM F2170) is highly recommended. Three tests for the first 1000 sq. ft. and one for each additional 1000 sq. ft. meets the industry standard.

✗ All too often, the flooring contractor ends up rejecting the concrete slab surface because it is too rough or not level to manufacturer's tolerances. Long delays can result while the substrate is brought up to standard. In some cases the floor installation proceeds regardless, leading to premature breakdown of the floor covering.

✓ Leveling standards for most resilient and hardwood flooring products on a suspended slab are 1/8" up or down over 10'. For slab on or below grade, 3/16" up or down over 10' applies. In new construction, once the first concrete pour is complete, an additional layer of self-leveling, cementitious underlayment is usually needed to flatten the main concrete slab before floor coverings can be installed.

✗ Many errors occur related to adhesive products and their application (i.e. a specified adhesive being switched for an inferior product because of price or availability; the wrong notched trowel size used to spread the adhesive). If the recommended adhesive is used incorrectly, the flooring product manufacturer will void their warranty.

✓ Confirming that the specified adhesive is being used on site and applied properly is critical to the overall success of the flooring system.

✗ British Columbia has both wet and dry environmental extremes, making proper product acclimation critical to its short and long term success. Gapping, buckling, bubbling, expansion, squeaks and face checking are just a few of the related problems.

✓ The building's permanent heat or HVAC system should be maintaining recommended temperature and relative humidity levels before, during and after installation. Flooring products should only be acclimated into approved site conditions.

✗ Every year, many floors fail due to poor installation practices at a cost of time, wasted materials and money.

✓ Many failures are preventable by ensuring that the installers on site are Trade-Qualified or Product-Qualified.

## 2. SUBSTRATE LEVELING



## 3. WRONG ADHESIVE



## 4. PRODUCT ACCLIMATION



## 5. POOR INSTALLATION PRACTICES



## HOW THE QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM PREVENTS FLOOR FAILURES

Our goal at the Master Floor Covering Standards Institute (MFCSI) is to help ensure your floor installation is a success.

We do this in two ways:

1. The NFCA (National Floor Covering Association) Floor Covering Reference Manual. This offers detailed instructions and specification guidelines for all aspects of a flooring installation.
2. The Quality Assurance Program. Even when the manual is specified for an installation, it may or may not be followed. A third party Quality Assurance inspector puts the manual into action

by issuing a series of reports at critical stages of the installation that reflect the standards laid out in the manual.

By planning ahead, many of the problems associated with floor covering installations can be avoided. The result is fewer project delays, product warranties in place, floor coverings installed according to nationally recognized standards and very satisfied clients.

### For more information contact:

The Master Floor Covering Standards Institute Inc.  
at [info@mfcsi.com](mailto:info@mfcsi.com) / [www.mfcsi.com](http://www.mfcsi.com) ♦

# DON'T LET AN EMERGENCY BECOME A DISASTER.

Be #EPready. [EmergencyReady.ca](http://EmergencyReady.ca)



## 1 MAKE A PLAN



### YOUR EMERGENCY PLAN SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Knowing your community's risks
- A family meeting place
- Emergency contacts
- Practice scenarios with family
- Safe-guarding your home
- Considering special needs and pets

## 2 GET A KIT



### YOUR EMERGENCY KIT SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Food & water
- Clothing & warmth
- First aid items
- Light
- Communication
- Survival tools
- Cooking supplies
- Sanitation items
- Medication
- Cash

## 3 STAY INFORMED



### LISTEN FOR INFORMATION ABOUT HOW TO PROCEED:

- Have first aid training
- Stay connected with your community
- Practice and review your plan periodically
- Locate your emergency reception area

## KNOW THE RISKS



EARTHQUAKES



TSUNAMIS



WILDFIRES



SEVERE STORMS

## IMPORTANT TIPS

### REVIEW YOUR PLAN



### PLAN FOR PETS



Don't leave pets behind.  
Identify emergency animal shelters in your area.  
Get a kit with supplies for your pets too.

### COMMUNICATE YOUR WELL-BEING



Place a sign in your window.  
Stay calm. Use HELP if you need assistance,  
OK if you don't.

## DOs AND DON'Ts

### DO

- ✓ Know how to turn off water, electricity, and gas
- ✓ Check on neighbours
- ✓ Evacuate if home is unsafe or advised to do so
- ✓ Stock and take your kit
- ✓ Keep your EP kit accessible

### DON'T

- ✗ Ignore official warnings
- ✗ Return home unless advised that it is safe to do so
- ✗ Drive in extreme weather
- ✗ Use BBQs, home generators, or camping heating equipment indoors
- ✗ Approach downed power lines

SJA is a not-for-profit organization that provides and coordinates vital volunteer-based community services.

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St. John Ambulance  
SAVING LIVES  
at work, home and play

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to only bond the bottom of the overlap transition piece to the sub-floor.

- Glue down floors are often cut tight to ceramic tile for a desirable level/flush transition. Even though the wood flooring is glued down, it will still expand and contract and so room for expansion should be built into the floor design. Special, flexible fillers that look like tile grout can be used to fill the expansion gap and provide a finished look.

Chris Maskell

Technical Coordinator

Master Floor Covering Standards Institute Inc.

Tel: 604 817 2740 Fax: 604 881 4744 ♦

## ATTENTION INSTALLERS!

Start your career in  
flooring the right way!



Floor Layer training and certification in Resilient, Carpet and Hardwood for installers is available on Annacis Island at the Floorlayers Training Centre.

Contact Mark Bevacqua at 604 524 6900 for more information.

## NEW BCFCFA MEMBERS

### C & L Flooring

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### Olson Floors Ltd.

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Email: olsonfloors@telus.net  
Website: www.olsonfloors.ca  
Bryne Olson

# THANKS!

The **Floorlayers Training Centre** would like to say a special thank you to **Paterson Products** for kindly donating an entire box full of Olfa knives and blades. The tools are great for apprentices to try and see the different types of tools available. **Jamey Paterson** came by in person to donate the tools. **Thank you for the support.** ♦



## EXCLUSIVE OFFER



Working with our sole preferred vendor in merchant services we proudly bring you this outstanding opportunity.

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Concord, On L4L 2N2



\* potential new members to BCFCFA are subject to an application and approval process

#### WHAT OUR CUSTOMERS SAY:

"At Pacific Rim flooring we focus on giving our clients two things that have made us successful; great service and great value. We look for the same things in our suppliers and Merchant 1 Payments has consistently delivered both. They reduced our costs with exceptional pricing and provide us outstanding customer service. All this and I know the money is in the bank. Merchant 1 Payments is a great business partner and we happily recommend them."

Roger Lu—Pacific Rim Flooring Ltd.

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