



FOR DURABILITY, HYGIENE AND SLIP-RESISTANCE, IT HAS TO BE RESIN FLOORING

Resin flooring is the flooring of choice for industrial applications whether manufacturing or warehousing. These include the most aggressive environments, because of the excellent performance characteristics of resin flooring and its ability to provide a seamless, hygienic, durable and slip-resistant floor.

FeRFA, the Resin Flooring Association, represents the majority of companies in the sector and uses a classification for different resin flooring types. This is the basis of the British Standard BS8204-6. The resin types are defined from Type 1 to Type 8, based on the applied thickness of the resin system. The thickest type is greater than 6mm and is effectively impervious, for the heaviest loading and trafficking. The FeRFA classification system allows a cross-reference between products from different manufacturers, irrespective of brand names, and provides useful guidance when selecting a resin flooring system.

TYPE	NAME	DESCRIPTION	DUTY	TYPICAL THICKNESS
1	Floor seal	Applied in two or more coats. Generally solvent or water borne.	LD	up to 150 µm
2	Floor coating	Applied in two or more coats. Generally solvent free.	LD/MD	150 µm to 300 µm
3	High build Floor coating	Applied in two or more coats. Generally solvent free.	MD	300 µm to 1000 µm
4	Multi-layer flooring	Aggregate dressed systems based on multiple layers of floor coatings or flow-applied floorings, often described as 'sandwich' systems.	MD/HD	> 2 mm
5	Flow applied flooring	Often referred to as 'self-smoothing' or 'self-levelling' flooring and having a smooth surface.	MD/HD	2 mm to 3 mm
6	Resin screed flooring	Trowel-finished, heavily filled systems, generally incorporating a surface seal coat to minimize porosity.	MD/HD	> 4 mm

7	Heavy duty flowable flooring	Having a smooth surface.	HD/VHD	4 mm to 6 mm
8	Heavy duty Resin flooring	Trowel-finished, aggregate filled systems effectively impervious throughout their thickness.	VHD	> 6 mm

In general, the service life of a resin floor will be proportional to its applied thickness. However many operational factors will directly affect the performance including the severity of trafficking (wheel type and loading), the frequency and efficiency of cleaning, mechanical handling, abuse and impact levels. In most industrial facilities there will be a variety of situations for each of which a different type of synthetic resin flooring will be most appropriate.

The versatility of resin flooring systems in industrial applications is in the public spotlight every year at the FeRFA Best Practice Awards. As thoughts turn towards this year's Awards, coming up in November, it can be seen from some of last year's winners that resin flooring has performed excellently in a range of industrial projects.

Zircon Flooring and Sika, for instance, won the Small Industrial Project of the Year category for their work at the Emmerdale TV Studios. This was a project which showed up the benefits of a resin flooring system – achieving a seamless, anti-static and perfectly flat floor, engineered to precise tolerances. This floor had to be installed to the highest specification in order to ensure the safe movement of HD cameras and other vital equipment around the studio.

In the same category ACC Flooring and Altro were highly commended for the staircase and corridors of the Swann Morton factory. In this refurbishment project a screed quartz resin flooring system turned out to be the perfect choice. Vinyl and a weak screeding material had to be removed prior to the installation of the resin screed to produce a durable, slip resistant and aesthetic finish.

The winners of the Large Industrial Category were the IRL Group and Sika for BMW's automotive processing plant in Oxford. This comprised over 3,700sq m of flooring, which had to meet very challenging requirements. It took the form of a protective dissipative self-smoothing system, which had to be installed simultaneously in three different areas, with all works completed within a six-day timeframe.

Central Flooring and Flowcrete were highly commended in this category. The project that they were involved in required the refurbishment of a Royal Mail sorting depot, which had to meet very high environmental targets. 10,000sq m of failing bitumen flooring had to be removed and was replaced with a 10mm flowable industrial screed over a four-week period. The waste bitumen - 286 tonnes - was recycled for local road schemes and the newly installed screed itself contained 38% recycled material.

Companies who have been involved in a project in the industrial sector which shows resin flooring to best advantage should get ready for this year's FeRFA Awards as the closing date is 13th October - look out for more information from FeRFA.

Training and quality assurance are important in this sector to ensure that a new resin floor is correctly installed. FeRFA therefore endorses and actively promotes "Qualifying the workforce" through the provision of NVQ and apprenticeship schemes. Association members are also required to operate quality assurance schemes to ensure the highest standards of performance. Meanwhile FeRFA continues to take a leading role in developing national and international standards for resin flooring.

In the interests of enhancing the sustainability of the sector, FeRFA also operates a recycling scheme, in which members agree to work towards sending zero waste to landfill, with 100 per cent of packaging and other waste being recycled. The scheme continues to grow in scale and importance. The 2017 figures for diversion of waste from landfill were 2,054.68 tonnes, compared with 1,877.82 in the previous year. The continuing year-on-year upward trend for the diversion of materials away from landfill shows that the industry as a whole is intent on improving its recycling performance.

Prior to the introduction of the FeRFA recycling scheme in 2011, waste packaging was routinely sent to landfill. The drive to sustainability has been encouraged by changes in the relevant legislation, with greater focus on streaming waste and identifying recycling opportunities.

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