



Kaiser MOB, Antioch, CA

## nora<sup>®</sup> Rubber Flooring Named Kaiser Permanente's Exclusive Rubber Flooring Provider

LAWRENCE, MA – Kaiser Permanente, the country's largest nonprofit healthcare system, recently named **nora**<sup>®</sup> rubber flooring as its exclusive rubber flooring provider for the company's medical centers and medical office buildings. Kaiser Permanente named **nora**<sup>®</sup> as one of only two standards for resilient flooring.

The announcement follows the healthcare provider's decision to remove products containing polyvinyl chloride (PVC) from its facilities. According to Kaiser Permanente's Thomas Cooper, Manager of Strategic Sourcing and Technology, "For Kaiser Permanente, developing a sustainable approach to the way we design, equip, build, maintain and commission our buildings is essential to our vision of creating environments that celebrate health across generations. Our efforts to remove PVC products from our facilities are directly related to the adverse effect PVC has on our environment and health."

During a 2 1/2-year search for appropriate alternatives to PVC products, Kaiser Permanente studied a variety of resilient flooring options including linoleum, laminate, rubber and polymeric flooring. A special research committee evaluated each manufacturer on product performance (especially maintenance), healthcare product line and environmental criteria. "We also conducted pilot projects at four of our sites, performed in-house testing for volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and staining and conducted staff surveys," said Cooper. "As part of our research, we monitored product installations and maintenance, conducted national site visits of installations at other healthcare institutions and public buildings with very high traffic, interviewed references across the country and evaluated first cost impact on construction projects." Kaiser Permanente also developed a business case that included installation and maintenance costs and health issues.



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According to Cooper, “**nora**® products performed very well on all the tests we performed.” Cooper also identified a number of benefits the new resilient flooring standards offer Kaiser Permanente, its employees and its patients. “Because these products do not need to be waxed or stripped, we’re looking at proven long-term savings. Additionally, they offer improved traction, reducing the potential for falls, and stain resistance that can eliminate many of the problems associated with betadine and most other chemical spills.”

The healthcare provider also points to noticeable improvements in acoustic properties over vinyl flooring and increased comfort underfoot. **nora**® products also offer improved durability and better infection control properties in operating rooms, when compared to vinyl flooring.

“**nora**® is thrilled to be named the exclusive supplier of rubber flooring to Kaiser Permanente,” said Andreas Mueller, National Market Segment Manager for Freudenberg Building Systems, manufacturer of **nora**® rubber flooring. “Kaiser Permanente is the first healthcare

system in the nation to move away from vinyl flooring products and push their suppliers to provide more green products. The fact that **nora**® products are PVC-free and are made of high quality rubber, mineral fillers and environmentally friendly, compatible color pigments, makes **nora**® products an attractive alternative to vinyl.”

The Kaiser Permanente standards for resilient flooring apply to construction projects at all Kaiser Permanente facilities, including new construction and renovation projects. The standards are in place for a period of three years, at which time they will be reviewed for renewal.

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