

METROPOLIS

ARCHITECTURE AND
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Design for Wellness

Personal, Public, and Social Health



WALLCOVERING Natural State

Choices in sustainable contract-grade wallcoverings just became more plentiful, with Wolf-Gordon rolling out its first commercial-grade PVC-free option. Made from an olefin composite, the new collection, Clair, is not only ecofriendly (it's devoid of plasticizers, heavy metals, halogenated fire retardants, and phthalates) but also free of conflict minerals, whose mining, production, and shipping are believed to facilitate conflict overseas.

Made in the United States, the collection features ten nature-inspired patterns printed using water-based inks left over from the company's previous production runs. "In the old days, the inks would've been mixed for one run and then thrown out," says Marybeth Shaw, the company's chief creative officer for design and marketing.

Although Clair was developed for high-traffic, commercial settings such as health-care facilities, good looks were not sacrificed for durability. "We've wanted a PVC-free product for years," Shaw says, explaining that 11 years ago, Wolf-Gordon introduced a product that was biodegradable but couldn't withstand the wear and tear of commercial environments. By comparison, Clair's bleach-cleanable surfaces are made from non-Red List, Healthier Hospitals Initiative-compliant ingredients that are disclosed in a Health Product Declaration (HPD). The collection's warm patterns mimic the textures of organic materials including wood, silk, and burlap. "In the end, aesthetics are another important element," Shaw says. After all, visually appealing design only helps ensure that the sustainable option gets specified. —*Kelly Beamon*