

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTS

Why are American Olean ceramic, mosaic and quarry tiles environmentally preferable products? Here are the FACTS for the educated customer who wants to buy “green” products.

FACT: American Olean Corporation achieved success in voluntary participation programs such as the US EPA’s 33/50 Waste Minimization Program and the Clean Texas 2000 Program.

FACT: American Olean tile products do not exceed the EPA’s Toxicity Characteristic Leachate Procedure (TCLP) limitation of 5 parts per million for any hazardous constituent. For comparison, one-tenth (0.1) of one percent of a product equals 1,000 parts per million.

FACT: American Olean uses only naturally occurring inorganic raw materials that are very plentiful (e.g., clay, talc, sand, water, etc.) to manufacture our tile products. This contributes to the environmental compatibility of our products. Since the products are made from inert raw materials, integration back into the environment is well received at the end of their useful life.

FACT: Use of virgin raw materials, even though they are plentiful, is minimized to the greatest extent possible. This is accomplished by utilization of recycled materials as components in the mix of ingredients used to formulate our wall and floor tile products. All recycled materials contained in American Olean products are from industrial processes (both internal and external). For example, a major component of the body in our manufactured floor tile products is a by-product from a 3M process that produces raw materials for roofing manufacturers, which was formerly disposed of as a waste.

FACT: Scrap tile generated during American Olean’s manufacturing processes is recycled to the maximum extent possible into new tile products. The majority of the small amount of scrap fired tile that cannot be recycled has been accepted in state approved beneficial reuse projects. Any tile waste that must be disposed is classified as “inert”, non-hazardous waste. In fact, some landfills use the material to stabilize roadbeds within their sites.

FACT: Four of American Olean’s plants (El Paso-wall, Gettysburg-mosaic, Lewisport-Quarry, and Monterrey-floor/wall/mosaic) have 100% recycling of wastewater generated by the manufacturing process. All other manufacturing facilities recycle water to the greatest extent practicable and we are continually working toward more reducing, reusing and recycling of wastes and by-products (in that order).

FACT: American Olean does not add lead (Pb) to any of its products or glazes. The majority of our glazes are water based with limited use of solvents, thus minimizing the potential for emissions of volatile organic compounds during the manufacturing process.

FACT: Tile produced in the United States prior to 1991 may have used limited amounts of lead bisilicate in some glazes. However, there are no known hazards from exposure to American Olean ceramic tile in its intended use. Once fired, the tile and glaze become fused together and is completely inert. There is no possibility of the glaze coating peeling as is the case with paint. In addition, fired tile and lead bisilicate are insoluble in water and, therefore, could not adversely affect soil or water quality, even if it were to be disposed of and come in contact with the environment.



FACT: American Olean manufacturing operations utilize natural gas as an energy source. No fuel oils or coals are utilized in our processes. Use of this clean burning natural resource minimizes air pollution emissions.

FACT: To the extent practical, all American Olean manufacturing sites make modifications to their operating schedules to maximize the use of energy during off-peak hours. These reductions in industrial requirements during peak consumption periods also allow the Utility Companies to operate more efficiently and provides relief to the local utility companies, helping them to better service the energy needs of the entire community.

FACT: Use of American Olean ceramic tile also helps to conserve energy wherever it is installed, because high strength cleaners, waxes, strippers, vacuuming, buffing, and sanding are not required; therefore, energy and machinery for these activities are not expended. Long-term maintenance of ceramic tile only requires mild soap and water. Thus, limited waste is produced during routine maintenance of tile (mops, sponges, etc. and a small amount of mop/rinse water). All cleaning wastes are non-hazardous and replacements are not considered to utilize “scarce” resources.

FACT: American Olean ceramic tile is more cost effective to the purchaser because of its lower life cycle cost stemming from its potentially indefinite useful life. Ceramic tile is conservatively estimated to last over 50 years under normal household use. There are still mosaic tiles installed during the 16th century in Europe that are as beautiful today as when they were originally produced.

FACT: American Olean ceramic tile is not flammable and meets all applicable ANSI standards for strength and relative absorption characteristics. Also, it is chemically stable and resistant to bacteria and most chemicals.

FACT: Historically, ceramic tile has been utilized with great success and is the preferred (often required) material for use at institutions, hospitals, restaurants, hotels, and other locations where sterile conditions must be easily maintained.

FACT: The majority of American Olean’s tile products meet the FDA requirements for food contact surfaces.

FACT: American Olean products do not contain any asbestos or mercury and have been approved for use in confined spaces over long periods of time where radiation exposure is a concern (e.g., nuclear submarines).

American Olean products, as referenced in this disclosure, means American Olean U.S. manufactured products only. Customers are advised to check with their local American Olean representative to determine the extent that products purchased can help provide credits toward certification of a building project under the LEED® Green Building Rating System (or any other “green” material requirement) or any customer-required parameter.