Panel Edges and Flatness of EXACOR™ Subflooring

As with any subflooring product, preparation of the subfloor for installation of finished flooring will be required. Some flooring products, especially flexible products such as carpet and thin vinyl finished floorings, may be susceptible to telegraphing from uneven edge transitions between panels. This condition can often be attributed to irregularities in the foundation or discontinuity in framing. This is most commonly seen at floor framing direction changes or framing type changes.

Prevention

The most common cause of uneven subfloor panels stems from framing irregularities. These irregularities can be caused by several factors; however, some preventative measures can be taken to avoid these issues at the source. EXACOR™ panels are not designed to correct out-of-plane irregularities in floor framing, and all framing members must be installed in-plane with adjacent framing.

Things to consider during framing

- Assess the foundation and concrete slab for flatness on the first floor where load bearing walls will be installed. Consider using a laser level to identify high and low areas of the foundation and flatten these areas using appropriate methods.
- Ensure load bearing walls are installed plumb and level in order to prevent height differences caused by walls sitting at a slight angle.
- Ensure all floor framing members are installed at the proper height, especially at transition areas where floor framing changes direction, size or type. The tops of rim boards, dimensional framing, engineered trusses, girders, beams and other structural members supporting the subfloor shall be installed in-plane at the same elevation.
- Dimensional lumber framing can crown, cup or twist due to drying conditions. In transitions from dimensional lumber to engineered joists, beams, or floor trusses the adjoining dimensional lumber may need trimmed to sit flush with the top of the engineered framing member. Framing members with a crown should be installed with the crown rising in the middle.

Treatment

In cases where uneven edges were not or cannot be prevented, treatment of transitions and panel seams may be needed to satisfy the flatness requirements of the finished floor manufacturer. Below are some common treatments used to address uneven transitions and seams.

Patch and Feather

Small divots, imperfections and unevenness can be addressed with an elastomeric patching compound that is intended for use over concrete/ masonry substrates. Follow the patching compound manufacturer's recommendations for gap filling limitations and applications. Minor sanding of the patching compound may be required to achieve a smooth surface after the patch is applied, however the EXACOR™ panel should not be sanded.

Apply Leveling Compound

Large areas of unevenness or areas that do not meet the flatness requirements of the finished floor manufacturer can be treated using a self-leveling underlayment or leveling compound that is compatible with concrete/masonry products. Assure the underlayment or compound is fully cured before installing the finished floor. Priming the subfloor prior to application is recommended in accordance with the leveling compound manufacturer's installation guidelines.

Install Underlayment

Many sound assemblies or finished floor manufacturers require an underlayment to be installed over the subfloor before the finished floor installation. Sound mats, foam or cork underlayments and similar products may also prevent telegraphing of uneven subfloor panels. However, transitions and panel seams with a height difference beyond the finished floor manufacturers' requirements must still receive treatment with an elastomeric patching compound or leveling compound before the underlayment is installed.

Please visit Huberwood.com or contact our technical department at 800-933-9220 Ext 2716 or at techquestions@huber.com with any questions or comments.