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Mullican Flooring's New Meridian Pointe Collection Carries Industry's First Lifetime "Moisture Warranty"

JOHNSON CITY, Tenn. – Mullican Flooring, a leading U.S. hardwood floor manufacturer, has raised the bar for innovation by introducing its Meridian Pointe collection – a group of prefinished products designed to resist cupping, warping and buckling caused by moisture.

The result of four years of testing, Meridian Pointe and its companion Aqua Shield system carry the industry's first lifetime "moisture warranty" on a solid hardwood flooring product.

"Problems associated with moisture are longstanding in the industry," says Mullican President Neil Poland. "We've literally broken down that barrier by developing a product that so effectively resists moisture that we're backing it up with a lifetime warranty."

Meridian Pointe products come in wider widths and have successfully passed Mullican's own internal performance testing, as well as third-party testing conducted by a leading research university.

"All the results confirm that if customers follow Mullican's specific installation requirements and correctly apply our two-part Aqua Shield system, their floors will not cup, buckle or warp for the life of the home," Poland says.

The company's patent-pending Aqua Shield system involves first applying Mullican Moisture Mat, a moisture-retardant underlayment, then installing a Meridian Pointe product. The flooring has been strategically engineered to allow each plank to expand at the bottom if exposed to moisture, without affecting the floor's surface.

“Because wood is a living material, it naturally responds to levels of moisture in the environment and can change its size,” Poland notes. “This is historically a major problem in the flooring industry, particularly in geographic areas where humidity levels continually rise and fall.”

In 2007, Mullican decided to tackle the issue by gathering its top leadership and technicians and brainstorming a solution. Their discussion eventually led to the idea of engineering a system into each plank that could potentially compensate for swelling.

Mullican technicians developed the flooring and tested it internally for a year before working another two years with researchers in a university’s wood products department. The research technicians explored changes to the flooring profile to provide Mullican with a realistic understanding of which design patterns were needed to keep the floor stabilized.

“Developing a flooring system that can resist the effects of moisture is a major accomplishment,” says Dr. Daniel Hindman, the forest products researcher who led the studies. “This product uses the same woods that have been traditional favorites in homes for many years. It’s just that the shape has been changed to resist movement and moisture-related problems. I believe that’s going to have a revolutionary impact. If the movement issues of hardwood flooring can be addressed, particularly in wider-width planks, a better product with less maintenance can be produced.”

In 2009, Mullican followed up the university’s research with additional field studies that involved installing Meridian Pointe in homes located in high-risk humidity locations. After observing and measuring the floors for cupping over the period of a year, Mullican officials confirmed that Meridian Pointe performed optimally, supporting all previous studies.

Manufactured at Mullican facilities in Johnson City, Tenn., and Norton, Va., Meridian Pointe is available in three-, four- and five-inch widths in five selections of red oak natural, white oak natural, oak saddle, oak autumn and oak gunstock. The company also operates production sites in Holland, N.Y., and Ronceverte, W.Va.

In order to qualify for the lifetime moisture warranty, customers must correctly apply the two-part Aqua Shield system and pre-register with Mullican to document specific information about the installation – such as room temperature, humidity level and other environmental conditions.

Meridian Pointe also carries the company’s new lifetime-warranty finish, CLARITAGE® Extra finish by PPG Industries, which helps these products offer durability and gloss longevity that exceed those for other hardwood flooring products. *Claritage* Extra finish is Mullican’s first lifetime warranty on a finish, which is also being applied to the company’s St. Andrews, Muirfield and Green Haven collections.

For more information, visit www.mullicanflooring.com.

More about Mullican Flooring

Headquartered in Johnson City, Mullican is known for its quality and diverse range of products and for being an industry leader in the production of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-certified 100-percent

Pure selections developed for the “green building” LEED market. In 2010, Mullican was a Pinnacle Honoree in the GreenStep Environmental Awards program sponsored by *Floor Covering Weekly*.

In addition to receiving approval from the United Nations to carry the official 2011 International Year of Forests logo (below), Mullican has earned the right to display the following industry logos reflecting correct chain-of-custody and certifications in support of global forest sustainability.



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