

# EcoWorx: From Cradle to Cradle product to Cradle to Cradle culture

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These were some of the questions Shaw's product development and design teams sought to answer when we set out to create a new commercial carpet tile backing in the late 1990's. A backing that was fundamentally green by design, offered better performance and quality than traditional carpet tile, and could be offered to our market at no additional premium.

The result was EcoWorx, a fully recyclable carpet tile free of PVC and phthalates, and made with 40% recycled content. Introduced to the commercial architecture and design markets in 1999, EcoWorx:

1. uses 40% less embodied energy than traditional PVC-backed carpet tile
2. is 40% lighter (making it more efficient to transport – an attribute that, alone, saves 769,000 gallons of gasoline per year).
3. offers superior performance over traditional PVC-backed tile, including 8x greater tear strength, 5x greater tensile strength, and 2x greater delamination strength

The innovative and environmentally responsible design of EcoWorx earned it both the 1999 Best of Neocon Innovation Award and the 2003 US Environmental Protection Agency Presidential Green Chemistry Award (making Shaw the only flooring manufacturer ever to receive this distinction). And in 2005, EcoWorx also earned Cradle to Cradle Silver certification, making it the world's first Cradle to Cradle certified flooring product.

Designed to be reclaimed, disassembled and remanufactured back into new EcoWorx at the end of its useful life, EcoWorx is also covered by a global Environmental Guarantee that pledges we will collect and recycle it at no cost to our customer. This pledge has spurred the expansion of an on-site elutriation facility at our EcoWorx manufacturing facility in Cartersville, Georgia, specifically to accommodate the reclamation and recycling of EcoWorx.

After more than ten years in the market, EcoWorx is holding its ground as a flagship Cradle to Cradle product. What began as a single product innovation need has become the global standard for sustainable flooring, and its influence on our company: the Cradle to Cradle philosophy has informed many aspects of our corporate sustainability commitment as well as our approach to responsible product design. Our new Design for Environment framework (based on Cradle to Cradle principles), our diverse and expanding carpet recycling operations, our Eco Specs product labeling, and the hundreds of fully certified Cradle to Cradle residential and commercial flooring options stand out among the myriad examples of this influence.

Today, Cradle to Cradle has become more than an approach to product design or even a product certification: the language and philosophy of Cradle to Cradle has become a fundamental part of our culture. And the platform from which we continue striving to create the most beautiful – and sustainable – flooring in the world.

EcoWorx and Shaw's other Cradle to Cradle flooring products are available through [www.shawcontractgroup.com](http://www.shawcontractgroup.com), [www.patcraft.com](http://www.patcraft.com), and [www.phillyqueencommercial.com](http://www.phillyqueencommercial.com). Information about Shaw's commitment to Sustainability through Innovation™ – the Shaw Green Edge®, is available at [www.shawgreedge.com](http://www.shawgreedge.com).



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