

The ANSI/IICRC S800 Standard and Reference Guide for Professional Inspection of Textile Floorcovering

The chair and co-chair of the consensus body describe the process and share selected excerpts from the standard

>> by Bill Doan and Lew Migliore



Since 1992, the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC) has published the IICRC Reference Guide for Inspection of Textile Floor Coverings. The Guide was last updated in 1996. The *ANSI/IICRC S800 Standard and Reference Guide for Professional Inspection of Textile Floorcovering* (ANSI/IICRC S800), published in January 2014, replaces the guide and is the first ANSI standard published by the IICRC in this subject category.

The history of inspection science and practice dates back to the 1970s. As wall-to-wall carpet gained market share as a preferred floor covering through the 1960s and 70s, the need for inspection services developed and grew significantly.

The *ANSI/IICRC S800* is the result of a collaborative effort involving industry experts, trade associations, educational institutions, training schools, and other organizations. The IICRC is the ANSI Secretariat for this document, and the development and updating of the document was overseen by the IICRC Standards Committee.

The *ANSI/IICRC S800* was developed over the course of nearly seven years, and was made possible through the generous contributions of a dedicated and distinguished group of volunteers (see Consensus Body and Acknowledgement List that accompanies this article). They exhibited the volunteer spirit that has been the driving force behind the IICRC since its inception. Volunteering to participate in an IICRC Standards Consensus Body requires openness to new ideas, concepts, and procedures and involves communication, cooperation, documentation, testing, and specialized education. Our evolving industry has consistently attracted professionals from all walks of life who donate untold thousands of volunteer hours building professional standards and certifications. It is upon the foundation of prior volunteers that the *ANSI/IICRC S800* was built, and it

is through the efforts of the volunteers listed here that the *ANSI/IICRC S800* is published. Carpet is a complex textile flooring material that is manufactured with an ever-changing variety of techniques, construction components and styles. Further, the “carpet value chain” includes not only manufacturers, but also specifiers, retailers and installers just to place the carpet in the end-user’s home or business. Once in place, carpet should be maintained and cleaned to protect the end-user’s investment, maximize the carpet’s use-life, and to enhance the environmental quality of the building in which it is installed.

Because of these interrelated complexities, it is inevitable that end-user complaints about carpet will arise. Therefore, the need arises for specially trained carpet inspectors who have general working knowledge in all areas of the carpet value chain. These professionals employ scientific methodologies to investigate, document and arrive at accurate and unbiased conclusions about how diverse claims arise and, if practical, how they might be resolved. The *ANSI/IICRC S800* was developed to provide assistance to these inspectors.

The Process

The development of the *ANSI/IICRC S800* dates to February 2009, when the first organizational meeting was held in Dalton, GA. This came after two years of planning and recruiting for the new standard.

The Consensus Body

The *ANSI/IICRC S800* Consensus Body is volunteer based. Careful and strict attention is paid to make sure there is a “balance of industry interest categories” and that no particular group is dominant. All members fall into one of the “Interest Categories” described below:

Producer - A person or organization producing, manufacturing or supplying the goods or services covered by the standard. Examples of Producers include, but are not limited to, inspection companies and inspectors.

SELECTED EXCERPTS FROM THE *ANSI/IICRC S800*

Section 1: The Professional Carpet Inspector

Carpet is a complex textile flooring material that is manufactured with a variety of techniques, construction components and styles. Further, the “carpet value chain” includes not only manufacturers, but also specifiers, retailers and installers, just to place the carpet in the end-user’s home or business. To increase the complexity of the value chain, carpet must be maintained with a variety of equipment, techniques and procedures, and ultimately it must be cleaned to prolong the end-user’s investment and their carpet’s use-life, and to enhance the environmental quality of the building in which it is installed.

Because of all these interrelated industry complexities, it is inevitable that end-user complaints about “carpet,” whether real or perceived, will arise. Therefore, there arises the need for specially trained carpet inspectors who have general working knowledge in all areas of the carpet value chain, so that they can employ scientific methodologies in investigating, documenting and arriving at accurate and unbiased conclusions about how diverse claims arise and, if practical, how they might be resolved.

Section 5.3: Photos Used as Evidence

Increasingly, unaltered digital photos are relied upon by commissioners for warranty interpretation. Further, they should be used as primary evidence in litigation involving carpet claims. Photos can help eliminate verbal speculation about issues investigated by an inspector. In order for photos to be used as credible evidence, they should:

1. be taken personally by the inspector;
2. accurately depict a problem or problems, and be printed, signed and dated by the inspector either individually or within an official inspection report.

Section 9.4.3: Statement and Detailed Description of the Problem

Inspectors should define the actual issue to make sure it fits the definition of fuzzing or pilling as outlined above. To identify the fuzzing or pilling characteristics that are present, inspectors should determine:

1. whether the problem appears overall or only in high-traffic areas, transitions from other flooring surfaces, or if it is related to moisture or other pertinent conditions;
2. if the appearance of trafficked pile differs from that of untrafficked pile;
3. when the problem became apparent after installation, and
4. what, if any, event took place that made the condition more visible.

If practical, inspectors can examine and describe the percentage of latex encapsulation around and penetration into the yarn bundles. Inspectors should perform this test only on an uninstalled and unused remnant, rather than on installed carpet. In the event that no attic stock is available, unused individual tufts may be obtained from places such as cut carpet edges under wall base and heat register covers.

Individual tufts should be obtained from a carpet remnant by first carefully delaminating (peeling) the secondary backing from the primary backing. Tufts can then be removed by pulling the yarn bundle out of the back of the primary backing. Tufts should not be removed from the pile side of the carpet. Yarn bundles should be cut in half with a sharp razor at a point close to the middle of the “U” or fold in the tuft. Each yarn cross section should then be examined under magnification sufficient for determining the approximate percentage of latex encapsulation and penetration.

User - A person or organization using the goods or services covered by the standard, rather than producing or selling them. Where appropriate, additional user sub-categories should be considered, including but not limited to the following: user-consumer, user-commercial, user-industrial, user-institutional, user-government, user-labor. Examples of Users include, but are not limited to, carpet manufacturers, carpet dealers, and property management companies.

General Interest - A person or organization directly and materially affected and otherwise interested in the goods or services covered by the standard. Examples include, but are not limited to, academics, universities, and standards-setting organizations.

The *ANSI/IICRC S800* Consensus Body was 33 percent Producer, 38 percent User and 29 percent General Interest.

Identifying, Researching and Writing Chapters

The Consensus Body reviewed what was included in the 1996 Guide, carefully deliberated about what should be updated, and, by consensus vote, agreed on the chapters to be included. With Consensus

Body agreement, members volunteered to serve as chapter chairs and chapter members. These “chapter teams” researched and wrote the individual chapters of the *ANSI/IICRC S800*.

Consensus Body Review

After chapters were completed, the Consensus Body review process was initiated. Consensus means substantial agreement has been reached by the Consensus Body members. This signifies the concurrence of more than a simple majority, but not necessarily unanimity. Consensus requires that all views and objections be considered, and that an effort be made toward resolution. Each chapter went through this process and was not completed until consensus was reached.

Public Review

The *ANSI/IICRC S800* was available from January 25 to March 11, 2013 for review and comment as part of the open 45-day public review period. All public review comments were reviewed and responded to. Concurrently, the Standard was also balloted for approval by the Consensus Body members. 🗳️

>> ABOUT THE AUTHORS



WILLIAM H. “BILL” DOAN, ANSI/IICRC S800 Consensus Body chair, retired in 2007 after a 43-year career in textile fibers (Dupont) and carpet care (Steamway, Shaw). He served as Dupont’s point man in its outreach efforts to the carpet care industry during the time of the launch of Stainmaster® carpet in the mid 1980s, and was recognized as the first Cleanfax magazine “Person of the Year” in 1989. Doan earned a degree in mechanical engineering from Texas Tech University and is an IICRC Certified Master Textile Cleaner. Doan resides with his wife, June, in suburban Atlanta.



LEWIS G. “LEW” MIGLIORE, ANSI/IICRC S800 Consensus Body co-chair, is president of LGM & Associates Technical Flooring Services in Dalton, GA. He has been associated with the floor covering industry for more than 43 years. Lew deals with a multitude of floor covering problems including, but not limited to, those related to manufacturing, specification, installation, performance, use and maintenance. He has written padding and installation specifications, maintenance manuals, and claims policies for carpet manufacturers and end users. Lew is the author and columnist of “Flooring Forensics” for Floor Focus Magazine a regular on Floor Radio as “The Industry Troubleshooter” and is the publisher of The Commercial Flooring Report distributed to over 100,000 readers worldwide.

CONSENSUS BODY & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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