**Carpet and Indoor Air Quality – The Facts**

Most manufactured materials and products emit gasses from VOC’s (Volatile Organic Compounds). This does not make them dangerous. For example, the distinctive smell of the interior of a new car (often perceived as pleasant) is the result of VOC emissions.

The smell of a new carpet is the result of VOC emissions – usually from the back coating material. This will disappear in time and the more ventilation in the room, the quicker it will go.

Studies by leading research organisations in the USA and Germany have proven that carpet contributes much less to indoor pollution than many other indoor finishes and materials.

These studies showed that taking paint as being rated 100, adhesives are 72.5; wallcoverings 8.5 and carpet 0.5. In other words, carpet emits 1/200th of the VOC gasses given off by paint.

There are three major pollutants of indoor air quality:

**Formaldehyde, which is emitted from a wide range of building products**

**Oxides of nitrogen**

**Oxides of sulphur**

Research has shown that wool is a particularly effective at absorbing these gases. A study in the USA showed that wool has one of the highest rates of removal of nitrogen dioxide from the atmosphere. Why? Because the three dimensional nature of carpet with the wool fibres in the pile standing vertical from the backing presents a considerable fibre area to absorb gases.

Other studies have shown that large amounts of sulphur dioxide are also absorbed and held by wool fibres in carpet.

Carpet contributes significantly fewer emissions than other building materials, indoor furnishings and finishes.

Indeed, carpet makes a significant contribution to better indoor air quality.