



Panelization

"Panelization" is a condition where localized excessive cracks develop between some strip flooring boards while adjacent boards remain tightly bonded together with no apparent separations. "Panelization" (or "sidebonding") is definitely not a new problem. It has, however, gained increasing attention as new EPA V.O.C. regulations have begun to affect the availability of traditional oil-based floor finishing products in many areas of the country.

While the development of "panelization" is certainly not limited to one brand of finish or to one particular subfloor design, the problem has been most closely associated with the use of water-based sealers and finishes on raw (untreated) maple strip flooring in areas of the country that experience distinctly different seasonal moisture conditions.

MFMA cautions installers and end-users that the use of some water-based finishes has produced a sidebonding effect that can result in localized excessive and irregular separations ("panelization") between maple flooring strips. We strongly recommend that end-users, project architects and specifiers consult with their flooring installer and finish manufacturer to obtain approved procedures for sealing and finishing a raw maple strip floor with water-based products.

If you have additional questions, please contact MFMA's Technical Director at 888/480-9138.

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