

## Does Antimicrobial Really Matter with Aircraft Flooring?

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Having the floors covered with a high-grade antimicrobial formulation like Lonseal's GreenMedic® is a great start to ensuring the health and safety of your workers and customers. You may have read somewhere about how antimicrobial flooring should not be specified due to its contribution to creating "superbugs". Based on the recent headlining stories, superbugs are evolving no matter what we do. If anything, the excessive use of hand sanitizers has more effect in creating superbugs than putting an antimicrobial layer on your flooring. So, here we are today living the movie "Contagion". Are you regretting the day you choose against antimicrobial flooring for your aircraft?



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Antimicrobial flooring is not just for healthcare. Before the COVID-19 outbreak, you rarely thought about how much bacteria could be on the floor in the airplane you are in. Every type of aircraft flooring from carpet to vinyl will have a myriad of microbial bacteria. While it is expected for healthcare facilities to choose a flooring material that is germ resistant, it should be the same for aircraft interiors. When you consider that passengers of an aircraft are breathing the same circulated air for hours and consuming products that are offered in airtight cabins, it's pretty clear why the aircraft community needs to be concerned about germ tolerance with regards to the flooring, too. Since microorganisms

are everywhere (especially on our shoes, the products that we interact with, and in the air we breathe) a flooring product that contributes to combatting illness should be highly specified.

**What exactly does antimicrobial flooring defend against?** The floor has the highest exposure to microbes of any part of any facility. Floors with antimicrobial added agents in their formulation are much better protected than those that are just top-layer with an antibacterial agent. Having the antimicrobial components within the structure of the flooring defends against a much broader range of damaging organisms. Lonseal's GreenMedic® is an exclusive high-grade antimicrobial component already in the construction of most of Lonseal's aircraft sheet-vinyl floor offerings. It impedes the growth of microorganisms, which then provides long-term protection from a broad spectrum of unwanted bacteria and other like unwelcomed guests. There are products out there that use the word antimicrobial incorrectly in their product line, giving the consumer a false sense of security. While there is no amount of cleaning that can ensure that a facility (aside from cleanrooms) will be microbe-free, maintenance and disinfection is the only weapon to kill microbes



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**What are the benefits of antimicrobial aircraft sheet vinyl flooring?** A seamless surface is the first line of defense to bacteria, mold, mildew, and other invaders because it does not give them a good place to hide and breed. Adding an antimicrobial formulation doubles your protection, and makes it nearly impossible for most microbial life to exist on or in the floor for long. The following are benefits to having Lonseal's GreenMedic® sheet vinyl flooring:

- Durable
- Easy to clean
- Easy to install
- Long-lasting
- Have low to no VOC emissions
- Non-allergenic
- No transfer of odors
- Slip-resistant
- Water-resistant
- Able to withstand heavy equipment
- Impeded growth of bacteria
- Aesthetically pleasing

**Be careful when specifying antimicrobial flooring.** Some sheet-vinyl flooring manufacturers often claim their product to be “inherently antimicrobial”. Some compounds are inherently antimicrobial, such as latex and silver, but epoxies, urethanes, and rubbers are not. A resinous floor is not antimicrobial unless an antimicrobial dispersion is incorporated into the resin. By taking the time to research the most suitable hygienic flooring solution to suit the purpose of the space, a specifier will be able to take steps to improve the hygienic qualities of the interior cabin area.

When walking into an airplane, you shouldn't have to stop and wonder if you are within a clean environment. It is up to the airline company to make sure that everything is as clean as possible, and by having an antimicrobial flooring system in place, an aircraft will be that much closer to that goal. Antimicrobial protection is an investment that gives the airplane owners the peace of mind to continue operations, safe in the knowledge that people in their aircraft have an added layer of protection in their environment.



*Written by Lace Greene-Cordts, Marketing Manager for Lonseal, Inc. Lace Greene-Cordts began her marketing career working on interior design and space planning for retail spaces. She has over 23 years of marketing experience working with high-profile companies from service to product related industries, with a great deal of attention to branding.*  
[Lace@Lonseal.com](mailto:Lace@Lonseal.com)