



PANAMA CANAL AUTHORITY
Memorandum

Date: August 22, 2001
From: Managers, Occupational Health and Safety divisions
Subject: Carpeting in ACP buildings
To: Department directors, divisions and main offices

1. The use of carpets inside buildings is not recommended due to the following reasons: Carpets collect and accumulate dust from shoes and dust coming inside buildings through the air. Experience from the last years has taught us that during the rainy season, which spans from end of April through end of November, the increase in humidity levels promotes mold and spore growth which can be very harmful for employees sensitive to these allergens. This results in a higher incidence of health problems that result in increased absences and lower productivity levels from the affected employees.

2. However, if it is decided to install carpeting in offices for specific reasons, we recommend that the following conditions be observed:

- a. Do not install carpeting in hallways, even if carpeting existed there before;
- b. Wherever carpeting exists or before installing carpeting for the first time, take past experiences into consideration and conduct a simple survey among employees working in the area to identify those who are sensitive or prone to problems that could result from having carpets. Employees who are sensitive to these problems shall be referred to the Occupational Health Division for their specific allergies to be identified and to receive recommendations on how to accommodate such employees in working areas with carpeting.
- c. Removing or refraining from installing carpets is recommended wherever there may be employees prone to allergy problems. If these options were not feasible, a thorough cleaning regime shall be implemented and the Industrial Hygiene Section shall recommend the frequency of such cleaning regime depending on the circumstances.

Original Signed
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