



Mechanical room floor in a high-rise building in Pittsburgh.

BREAKING THE EPOXY PARADIGM

FLEXMAR® Coatings increases productivity and reduces downtime with its innovative all-polyaspartic floor coating systems technology

by Robyn M. Feller

Pittsburgh may be home to some of the biggest floor coatings companies in the world but one grassroots ground-breaker has changed the way applicators across the nation do business. Since 2005, *FLEXMAR Coatings Inc.* has made a name for itself as an innovative floor coatings manufacturer specializing in polyaspartic technology for the purpose of increasing productivity and reducing cost, lost revenue and downtime in the residential and commercial markets.

The All-Polyaspartic Advantage

The privately owned company's founder, Jack Bracco, President and CEO, started *FLEXMAR Coatings* based upon a deep knowledge of the coatings technology garnered while working for Bayer Material Science (now known as Covestro), which patented the technology. With a background in polyurethane, polyurea and polyaspartic technologies from his years as a technical marketing manager for maintenance and construction coatings, Jack has a keen appreciation and knowledge of the technology that *FLEXMAR* specializes in—polyaspartic/polyurea concrete coatings. The mission of *FLEXMAR*, since its inception, has been to bring the unique advantages of patented polyaspartic technology to the market.

Jack shares, "We introduced that technology to the American market at World of Concrete in 2006 in Las Vegas, Nevada. In 2007, *Concrete Construction* magazine named *FLEXMAR*'s polyaspartic polyurea sealers a 2007 Best Decorative Product. The name was so odd that people couldn't even pronounce or remember it. Today, generically, polyaspartic technology is almost as commonly known as epoxy or polyurethane. Key to entering into the polyaspartic business was the discernibility between that technology, which is based upon its ability to crosslink at temperatures below 50 degrees F and down to zero degrees F, and be applied and returned to service in a short period of time, like one to two hours after application, compared to traditional technologies like epoxies and polyurethanes. We were able to demonstrate and introduce the idea of polyaspartic to the point where you could go in and do a residential garage from start to finish and have it returned to service by late afternoon of the same day, whether it is spring, summer, fall or winter. Those older processes took two, three, four days just to complete in order to cure up, crosslink and walk on them if the temperatures were above 50 degrees F. We shortened the time span for return to service to about eight hours or less no matter what the temperature is. And

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that was huge. We broke what we call the 'epoxy paradigm.' In addition, we increased the durability and aesthetic qualities by achieving increased wear resistance, cleanability and non-yellowing from UV sunlight. This has resulted in a longer coating life cycle and sustainability and even qualifies for LEED points. Our all-polyaspartic coating systems feature zero VOC, virtually no odor and can be applied in all four seasons because they cure and harden at temperatures below zero degrees F."

From Residential to Commercial

Over the years, FLEXMAR has expanded from small residential projects to larger commercial establishments, such as restaurants, health care facilities and major airline hangars. FLEXMAR was even featured on an episode of "This Old House" in January 2008. Jack notes, "It's extremely important to be able to go and redo a restaurant kitchen overnight without delaying the establishment's opening or closing. The same is true for something like a dialysis clinic where they have to go in and remodel and redo something in a matter of a weekend and still be open for business on a Monday morning at 7 a.m. This whole concept of a short downtime, saving the commercial owner loss of revenue because they can't close their business, is a very powerful advantage."

Simplified Technology, Big Gains

FLEXMAR Coatings' systems are really simplified. The company features a family of two basic polyaspartic products under the trademark NextGen®. One is a self-prime color coat in 24 standard colors and a clear coat sealer. Jack says, "We don't



High school cafeteria floor with VARIEGATE near Pittsburgh.



Dealership paint booth. Two coats of NextGen Clear Coat applied over prepared concrete in a luxury automobile body shop paint booth located in the Pacific Northwest.

put down a polyurea primer or an epoxy primer because they both can yellow and discolor under the influence of sunlight or overhead lighting. Everything is polyaspartic because of its quick crosslink and walk-on time/return to service."

What truly sets FLEXMAR apart, according to Jack, is its technical service and product knowledge of coatings technology. He says, "We are an innovative coatings manufacturer, focused and specializing in polyaspartic floor coatings technology for the purpose of increasing productivity and reducing downtime. That translates into huge cost savings. And, we're trying to grow our marketplace here in Pittsburgh as well as nationwide by making general

contractors, architects and applicators aware that this remarkable technology is available. They do not have to worry about closing down projects just to paint a floor or for other trades to come in and do their work. It's a game changer."



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