

# Floor Covering Media

Your Gateway to the Floor Covering Industry

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## More companies are recycling these days



Recycling is the detritus of our lives. Plastic, glass, metal and paper are making treks to processing plants across the country. Much of this refuse is transformed into versions of the same material it was before it hit the curb.

That the discarded tuna can you parted with earlier this week could very well end up on the shelves as another tuna can or something else. A pickle jar you tossed may be reinvented into another container entirely during the smelting process. The same could be said of paper products made for printed matter such as printed newspapers reborn from pulpy stew. Even the home decor industry has found several sources of inspiration for new furnishings during the recycling craze. Furniture companies and smaller studios repurpose their own production waste, source discards and leftover materials for the purpose of making renewable goods.

Organizations find these methods an ideal approach to offer sustainably produced products, encourage design R&D, and even cut industrial disposal costs. Plastics represent another significant part of this recycling initiative.



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Ikea product developer Anna Granath is collaborating with the Stockholm, Sweden-based studio Form Us With Love. What she devised was a covering material for a kitchen cabinet door sustainably made from processed plastic bottles. The door is made of recycled, shredded wood and the Kungsbacka cabinetry has a rich matte, charcoal-hued finish, which belies its modest price tag. Granath said that *"sustainability should be for many people, not just for those who can afford it,"* adding that *"our ambition is to increase the share of recycled materials in our products."*

Even the leftover plastic film used to wrap furniture palettes is ground into pellets, to manufacture the Skruttk desk pad.

Glass scraps and rejected pieces from one of Ikea's suppliers are recycled into marbled vases, which are created by Iina Vuorivirta and part of [Ikea's](#) PS 2017 accessories line.

Emeco, a furniture maker in Hanover, Pennsylvania, teamed with designer Philippe Starck on the Broom chair, a sleek, comfortable stacking chair that's made of 75 percent waste polypropylene and 15 percent reclaimed wood fiber. The name is a play on the chair's origins. "Imagine", says Starck, "a guy who takes a humble broom and starts to clean the workshop, and with this dust he makes new magic."

Emeco isn't new to the recycled material/new furniture game. Their aluminum Navy chair, commissioned during World War II, has been made of recycled aluminum since the 1940s. The material withstood the rigors of warfare and sea air. The company has even collaborated with Coca-Cola to turn soda bottles into plastic versions of the chair. ([www.emeco.net](http://www.emeco.net) )

Ikea is premiering its own plastic and wood-fiber chair early this year. The Odger will come in a range of colors and wood finishes.

Dutch designer Dirk Vander Kooij makes his Melting Pot dining tables out of discarded plastic toys, videotapes and computer parts. The heated components meld into abstract patterns, with no two tables being the same. Vander Kooij also recycles his test pieces and waste plastics, extruding them into new chairs, cabinetry and even music speakers, using an enormous industrial robot arm. He created the arm himself, and won the Dutch Design Award for it in 2011.

Vander Kooij thinks we have a misplaced notion that plastics are only cheap and throwaway. In fact, transforming them can create new and enduring designs: "Recycled material is unique, and has a history that can literally be seen in the product," he says. "That gives particular beauty and layering." ([www.dirkvanderkooij.com](http://www.dirkvanderkooij.com) )

Another Netherlands-based designer, Tamara Orjola, found new life for discards from the timber industry. "There's more to the tree than just wood; pine needles account for 20 to 30 percent of its mass," she says. So she came up with the idea of cooking the needles into a material she calls "forest wool," which can be made into biodegradable textiles and furniture.

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## Flooring Updates

*By Betty*

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