

# Tarkett and Aquafil close the loop on commercial carpet tiles

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Tarkett, headquartered in Paris, has announced a partnership with Italy-based Aquafil to close the loop on commercial carpet tiles. The partnership is the result of an intensive collaboration over recent years that has gone beyond the traditional customer and supplier relationship, according to a Tarkett news release.

Having developed a breakthrough technology at its Waalwijk, Netherlands, facility, Tarkett says it is now able to separate the two principal components of carpet tiles—yarn and backing—while retaining more than 95 percent yarn purity. This level of purity is vital in ensuring that the nylon 6 yarn can be recycled by Aquafil and transformed into its regenerated Econyl nylon, which is used to make sportswear, eyewear and carpets.

In addition, Tarkett has increased capacity in Waalwijk to produce its EcoBase carpet tile backing to meet customers' growing demands, the company says. EcoBase is Tarkett's 100-percent-recyclable carpet tile backing. The company offers a wide range of products, including vinyl, linoleum, rubber, carpet, wood, laminate, artificial turf and athletics tracks and serves customers in more than 100 countries.

Tarkett has invested approximately 15 million euros in the initiative aimed at closing the loop on carpet tiles in Europe.

“Technological innovation now makes it possible to multiply the life cycles of building materials. Together with Aquafil, we are accelerating our circular economy journey and leading our industry’s progress in carpet recycling,” says Fabrice Barthélemy, Tarkett CEO. “This is a fundamental step forward in maximizing the value of materials and preventing carpet tiles from being incinerated or sent to landfill. Truly closing the loop on flooring is a key driver of Tarkett’s strategy to preserve natural resources and protect the environment.”

Giulio Bonazzi, Aquafil CEO, remarks, “We are delighted to help Tarkett with the last mile of its journey to close the loop on carpet tile production. We must urgently transform the way products are designed, produced and consumed. Through our collaboration with Tarkett, we will strengthen our commitment to realizing this vision by increasing the reutilization of yarns and helping to design out waste.”

Aquafil has 16 plants in Italy, Scotland, Slovenia, Croatia, the United States, Thailand and China.

Tarkett has sourced Econyl nylon yarn from Aquafil for more than a decade and uses Econyl in its Desso AirMaster carpet tiles. The partnership is now going full circle, with Aquafil sourcing postconsumer nylon 6 yarn from Tarkett to create its regenerated Econyl yarn.

“Closing the loop is a collaborative endeavor and we invite our customers to join us in making this journey together through our ReStart flooring take-back and recycling program,” Barthélemy says.