

Formica® Laminate

THE ORIGINAL HIGH PRESSURE LAMINATE *by* FORMICA GROUP

Product Data Sheet



Preface

This information describes the composition of Formica® Laminates and gives advice for their handling, processing, use and disposal. It covers all Formica Laminate grades as described in EN 438. Formica Laminates are not classified as hazardous substances and therefore they do not require a special marking nor a description by a safety data sheet.

Contents

- 1. Description**
- 2. Storage and Transportation**
- 3. Handling and Machining of Formica Laminate**
- 4. Environmental and Health Aspects in Use**
- 5. Maintenance**
- 6. Formica Laminate in Fire Situations**
- 7. Energy Recovery**
- 8. Waste Disposal**
- 9. Technical Data**

1. Description

The materials referred to are high pressure decorative laminates (Formica® Laminate) according to the European Standard EN 438 and to ISO 4586.

Formica Laminates are sheets consisting of layers of cellulose fibrous material (normally paper) impregnated with thermosetting resins and bonded together in a high pressure process. The process, defined as a simultaneous application of heat ($\geq 120^{\circ}\text{C}$) and high specific pressure ($\geq 5\text{ MPa}$), provides flowing and subsequent curing of the thermosetting resins to obtain a homogeneous non-porous material ($\geq 1,35\text{ g/cm}^3$) with the required surface finish.

Basically more than 60% of Formica Laminate consists of paper and the remaining 30 to 40% consists of cured phenol-formaldehyde resin for core layers and melamine-formaldehyde resin for the surface layer.

Both resins belonging to the group of thermosetting resins are irreversibly interreacted through cross linked chemical bonds formed during the curing process producing a non-reactive, stable material with characteristics which are totally different from those of its component parts.

Formica Laminates are supplied in sheet form in a variety of sizes, thicknesses and surface finishes.

Where improved fire retardance is required, the laminate core may be treated with an additive which does not contain halogens.

2. Storage and Transportation

Storage and transportation should be carried out in accordance with the published Formica Technical and Fabrication Information; no special precautions need to be taken.

For transportation, Formica Laminates are classified as a non-hazardous product; no labelling is required.

3. Handling and Machining of Formica Laminate

The usual safety requirements of fabrication and machining should be observed with regard to dust extraction, dust collection, and fire precautions.

Because of the possibility of sharp edges protective gloves should always be worn when handling laminates.

Contact with dust from Formica Laminates does not present any special problems, however a small percentage of personnel may be sensitive or even allergic to machining dust in general.

4. Environmental and Health Aspects in Use

Formica decorative laminates are cured and therefore chemically inert. Formica Laminate formaldehyde emission level is far below the limit for wood based materials. Due to their very low permeability Formica Laminates bonded to wood based substrates act as a barrier against possible formaldehyde emissions coming from the substrates.

There is no migration affecting food and, consequently, Formica Laminates are approved for contact with foodstuffs.

The decorative surfaces are resistant to common household solvents and chemicals and have therefore been used for many years in applications where cleanliness and hygiene are important.

9.1.3. Solubility

Insoluble in water, oil, methanol, diethyl ether, n-octanol, acetone

9.1.4. Boiling point

None

9.1.5. Evaporation rate

None

9.1.6. Melting point

Formica® Laminates do not melt

9.1.7. Calorific value

18 - 20 MJ/kg

9.1.8. Heavy Metals

Formica Laminates do not contain toxic compounds of antimony, Heavy metals, barium cadmium, chromium^{III}, chromium^{VI}, lead, mercury, selenium.

9.2. Stability and reactivity data**9.2.1. Stability**

Formica Laminates are stable; they are not considered to be reactive or corrosive.

9.2.2. Hazardous reactions

None

9.2.3. Material incompatibility

Strong acids or alkaline solutions will stain the surface

9.3. Fire and explosion data**9.3.1. Ignition temperature**

Approx. 400°C

9.3.2. Flash point

None

9.3.3. Thermal decomposition

Possible above 250°C. Depending on the burning conditions (temperature, amount of oxygen, etc.) toxic gases may be emitted, e. g. carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, ammonia.

Formica Laminates are classified safe when tested according to NF F 16 101

9.3.4. Smoke and Toxicity

Formica Laminates are classified F2 when tested according to NF F 16 101.

9.3.5. Flammability

Formica Laminates are not considered to be flammable. They will burn only in a fire situation, in presence of open flames.

9.3.6. Extinguishing media

Formica Laminates are considered as class A material. Carbon dioxide, water spray, dry chemical foam can be used to extinguish flames. Water dampens and prevents rekindling. Persons in fire situations should wear self breathing apparatus and fire protective clothing.

9.3.7. Explosion hazards

The machining, sawing, sanding and routing of Formica Laminates produce class ST-1 dust. Safety precautions and adequate ventilation must be observed to avoid airborne dust concentration.

9.3.8. Explosion limits

Dust levels should be kept below 60 mg/m³

9.3.9. Protection against explosion and fire

In the case of fire Formica® Laminates shall be treated as wood based materials.

9.4. Electrostatic behaviour

It minimizes the generation of charge by contact-separation or rubbing with another material. It does not need to be earthed. Surface resistivity is between 10^9 – 10^{12} ohms and a chargeability of $V \leq 2$ kV according to CEI IEC 61340-4-1 so that Formica Laminates are considered as antistatic material.

9.5. Storage and transport

Formica Laminates are classified as non-hazardous for transportation purposes and there are no specific requirements.

9.6. Machining

Use gloves to protect from sharp edges and safety glasses to prevent eye injuries. No special working equipment is necessary, except protections to minimize dust exposure in case of sheet machining.

9.7. Disposal considerations

Waste material should be handled according to local regulations. Burning is permitted in approved industrial incinerators.

9.8. Health information

Formica Laminates are not considered to be dangerous for humans and animals. There is no evidence of Formica Laminates toxicological effects and ecotoxicity. Formica Laminate surfaces are physiologically safe and approved for use in contact with foodstuffs according to EN 1186.

9.8.1. Working areas

General dust regulations are applicable.

9.8.2. Formaldehyde emission

< 0.4 mg/h m² (tested according to EN 717-2)
< 0.05 ppm (tested according to EN 717-1
(WKI chamber method)

9.8.3. Pentachlorophenol

Formica Laminates do not contain PCP (Pentachlorophenol).

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This data sheet is designed to give you important information about Formica® Laminates and the fact that Formica Laminates comply with EN438:2005. The statement as to industry standard compliance is accurate and whilst we make reasonable efforts to ensure that the other statements in this data sheet are accurate, this cannot be guaranteed and no condition or warranty to this effect shall be implied.

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