

About the Porcelain Tile Certification Agency

The Porcelain Tile Certification Agency (PTCA) was established jointly by the Ceramic Tile Distributors Association (CTDA), representing distributors, and the Tile Council of North America (TCNA), representing manufacturers.

Together these two groups of ceramic tile industry leaders represent a total of more than 500 distributors and manufacturers. PTCA is a result of their belief that misunderstandings on the definition of porcelain tile and mislabeled products result in complex and often costly problems. They have agreed that a product certification program for porcelain tile will help mitigate these problems.

Under the program, manufacturers who want to “prove” their product is really porcelain (meeting the water absorption criteria of the American national standard) can have their product tested to determine compliance with that criteria. Use of the Porcelain Certification mark on their product packaging, marketing materials, and more confirms that compliance.

To learn more about the Ceramic Tile Distributors Association (CTDA), please visit their website at www.ctdahome.org.

To learn more about the Tile Council of North America (TCNA), please visit their website at www.tileusa.com.

For more information:
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Will the REAL porcelain tile please stand up?

The term “porcelain tile” is specifically defined by an American national standard. Sometimes the term “porcelain” is also used to identify tiles that do not meet this standard and do not test to the specifications listed. Unfortunately, it is not possible to identify porcelain just by looking at it. Until now...

CERTIFIED
P  **RCELAIN**
TILE
0.5% or less water absorption



Porcelain Tile Certification can change that.

Porcelain tile offers specific wear characteristics.

Many ceramic tile installations do not require porcelain tile. But in some cases, porcelain's dense, impervious body is necessary to meet the environmental and wear demands of the installation. Unfortunately a lot of tile is mislabeled porcelain when, in fact, it does not meet the specifics of its definition.

For example, because of its low water absorption characteristics, porcelain tile is considered "frost-proof" and can be used in external applications in cold environments. If a tile described as porcelain but not meeting the qualifications of porcelain is used in an exterior installation, it may fail.

When non-porcelain tile is misrepresented, or if there is simply no proof that a tile meets the water absorption criteria of the American national standard for porcelain, the wrong tile may be installed for the specifications. Then the entire installation is apt to fail. This is expensive, requiring the removal, replacement and reinstallation of tile. It's time consuming. It raises the potential for financial liability. And, it reflects poorly on the manufacturer, distributor, retailer and installer.

Porcelain tile is defined by the American National Standard (ANSI) A137.1 (1988) as "a ceramic mosaic tile or paver tile that is generally made by the dust-pressed method of a composition resulting in a tile that is dense, impervious, fine-grained, and smooth with sharply formed face."

This same ANSI standard references ASTM C373 as its recommended test method.

Producing porcelain tile is a more intensive and costly process.

As a result, porcelain tile is often more expensive than other tiles. Lower cost tiles labeled porcelain but with higher than standard absorption characteristics can be misleading. Manufacturers and distributors are aware of marketplace confusion over what is and is not porcelain.

Porcelain certification will verify the appropriate absorption for porcelain tile and assure the buyer is getting the desired quality. Tile labeled porcelain but without certification has no comparable assurance.

Certification limits liability.

US distributors are responsible for the products they sell and statements they make. If a distributor misrepresents the tile it sells as "porcelain" because it does not clearly meet the US standard water absorption criteria for porcelain tile, the distributor could be subject to liability. Porcelain Tile Certification will reduce the liability to US distributors.

How does Porcelain Tile Certification work?

Porcelain certification offers manufacturers the opportunity to certify that their product meets the standard water absorption criteria for porcelain. Certification also validates that the tile a distributor sells will meet that criteria. And end users who purchase porcelain tile have the knowledge that the product will meet the required specifications.

- Manufacturers may apply for Porcelain Tile Certification by submitting samples of each tile series to be tested by a third-party testing organization to determine compliance with the standard water absorption criteria.
- Manufacturers seeking certification pay the costs of testing as well as initial and annual licensing fees. Recertification of tile at least every three years will be required.
- Manufacturers may then use the PTCA certification mark on their product packaging, marketing materials, and more as confirmation of that their porcelain tile is compliant with PTCA requirements.