



**CFA president: John Alcock**

# Damp testing: Why I love the hygrometer

YOU might have thought that after all the many articles published in **CFJ**, all the columns, the features as well as all the data sheets, the training courses and Q&A sessions out there, that moisture and its problems associated would have been done to death.

So why do the same old issues and problems keep popping up?

I have been involved with the manufacturer's committee of the CFA for the best part of 20 years and yet, at a recent meeting, one of the many topics raised was that old chestnut – the best method of determining moisture within the subfloor.

No surprise perhaps but, being a traditionalist, I favour the hygrometer – always have, always

will. Some manufacturers advocate modern electronic methods, namely Protimeter and Tramex instruments, saying they should be preferred for use in this day and age to determine moisture levels.

The problem I see with these modern methods, and perhaps why moisture is such a recurring problem, is that there are no values given to them.

With a hygrometer you know that it is 75% RH – the British Standard – below that is OK, but above that percentage the floor must be considered wet. No one states categorically with the electronic methods, as far as I know, that if it is above a certain reading the floor is wet or below it is dry. That, I think, is where a lot of the

problems lie.

You need definitive proof of the moisture content that relates directly to the British Standard and only the hygrometer delivers this.

Obviously, other methods have their applications and I don't see why they should not be used for screening or providing a general real time appraisal of the moisture content of a given area of flooring.

They are quick and immediate and for a general assessment of conditions are absolutely ideal. That said, even with these modern methods, you've got to understand what the readings mean – they are by no means absolute.

The trouble with moisture is that there is no easy answer; you must do the testing accurately. With the

hygrometer, provided it is calibrated correctly, put down in the right area and left down for a sufficiently long time period to achieve equilibrium, it is, in my opinion, pretty much infallible. I don't think any of the other methods have yet got either sufficient history or the experience behind them.

The problem with these modern methods is that there is a temptation to interpret the results to give the answer you desire; sadly that isn't always an accurate analysis of the moisture content.

I firmly believe that if we all stuck with the hygrometer, did the testing correctly and acted on the result, moisture would be a problem of the past – what do you reckon?



## Flooring industry Training Association

■ Prices include VAT. The first figure in brackets is for CFA or NICF members, the second is for non-members.

### TEXTILE

**Essential carpet fitting** (5 days): (£690.90 / £730.85) **Mar 2; Apr 27; Jun 8; Jul 20.** (L)

**Intermediate carpet fitting** (5 days): (£690.90 / £730.85) **Mar 30; May 18; Jun 6.** (L)

**Advanced carpet fitting** (4 days): (£562.83 / £605.13) **Mar 16; May 5; Jun 22.** (N)

**WOOD & LAMINATE**  
**Essential wood fitting** (3 days): (£446.50 / £486.45) **Mar 9; Apr 20; Jun 15; Jul 27.** (L)

**Intermediate wood fitting** (3 days): (£446.50 / £486.45) **Jul 13.** (L)

**Laminate & floating wood fitting** (2 days): (£343.10 / £385.40): **Mar 12; Apr 23; Jun 18; Jul 30** (L)

**VINYL**  
**Domestic vinyl fitting** (2 days): (£343.10 / £385.40): **Mar 5; Apr 30; May 1; Jun 11; Jul 23.** (L)

**Safety and smooth vinyl (commercial) fitting** (4 days): (£562.83 / £605.13): **Mar 2 (M); Mar 23 (L); Apr 27 (M); May 11 (L); Jun 8 (M); Jun 29 (L); Jul 20 (M).**

(L) Loughborough (M) Manchester (£562.83 / £605.13): **Mar 16; Apr 5; Jun 22.** (N)

**Estimating and planning** (2 days): (£343.10 / £385.40):

**Mar 3; Apr 28; Jun 9; Jul 21.** (L)  
**Understanding moisture**

(1 day): (£152.75 / £196.23): **Mar 27; Apr 15; Jul 3.** (L)

**Subfloor preparation** (2 days) (£343.10 / £385.40): **Mar 24; Apr 12; Jun 30; July 1.** (N)

**The Rubber Flooring Company** (training day) (1 day) Contact Steve Green (T: 01254 504711) Email: [steve.green@therubberflooringcompany.co.uk](mailto:steve.green@therubberflooringcompany.co.uk) (£146.88 fees will be refunded on completion of course)

(N) Nelson (L) Loughborough

■ T: 0115 950 6836

■ [www.fita.co.uk](http://www.fita.co.uk)

## NVQ COURSES

**FITA NVQ**  
**FITA offers NVQ training via EWPA and OSAT.**

Contact FITA for details.

■ T: 0115 950 6836



Floortrain (GB) is a registered City & Guilds assessment centre, providing NVQs in textile, impervious and wood floorcoverings. Full funding for these courses available in 95% of cases. A wide range of training packages is offered to intermediate or advanced levels. Contact Dominic

■ T: 01709 780505

### FERFA

Courses include In-situ resin flooring apprenticeship scheme; prepare and profile substrates apprentice scheme; work-based recorders (half-day training session); assistance with obtaining NVQ level 2 In situ resin flooring. ■ T: 01252 714250



## Mapei CPD seminars across UK

**MAPEI** held a CPD on fast-track screeds at the Surface Design Show last month and plans further seminars at locations across the UK, including Glasgow, Manchester, London, Belfast and Birmingham.

Training plays a vital role within Mapei, which manufactures ceramic adhesives and associated building products. The company's CPD seminars are designed to help trade professionals refresh and improve their skills.

RIBA accredited and Construction Services CPD certified, Mapei seminars on screeds' and subfloor preparation are designed to provide guidance on the specification of correct materials, avoidance of substrate failures and awareness of

current British and European Standards and Building Regulations within their respective disciplines.

The company's specification team provides reference material and audiovisual aids. Each seminar lasts around 40 minutes and can be arranged at practices and organisations nationwide.

Mapei seminars diary includes: RIBA Roadshow, Oct 22, Radisson SAS Hotel, Belfast; Nov 12, RIBA, London; Construction Services CPD Roadseminar Tour: Mar 11, Lancashire County Cricket Club; May 6, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Glasgow; Jul 2, Royal National Hotel, Russell Square, London; Oct 8, Birmingham City Football Club. [www.mapei.co.uk](http://www.mapei.co.uk)  
T: 0121 508 6970

### Flooring Assessments

offers on-site assessment for floorcovering City & Guild NVQ at all levels, including CSCS cards and training to up-skill in carpets, impervious and wood flooring:

■ T: 07515885912

■ [dave@flooringassessments.com](mailto:dave@flooringassessments.com)

■ [www.flooringassessments.com](http://www.flooringassessments.com)

**Bostik Flooring Academy**  
St Helens College offers training in floorcovering NVQ Levels 1, 2 and 3 and construction diplomas replacing the construction awards for 14-19 age group. Training is for two years on

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## Training directory

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a day release basis. The college also offers On Site Assessment and Training (OSAT) for experienced workers and the Experienced Workers Practical Assessments (EWP A) for CSCS cards.

■ T: 01744 623640

**Scotfloor Training** offers construction skills approved floorcovering occupations level 1, 2 and 3 courses in textile, imperious and wood, plus on site assessments for SVQ CSCS accreditation, and apprenticeship block release training for levels 1, 2 and 3 in Scotland. Contact Rory MacGillivray:

■ T: 01870 602525

■ M: 07879443518

■ www.floortraining.co.uk

■ E: rory@floortraining.co.uk

### COLLEGE NVQ COURSES

NVQ floorcoverings (levels 1, 2 & 3) offered at Thomsit Centres & OSAT for experienced workers.

**Northumberland:** Graham

Cunningham ■ T: 07976 539154

**Leicester:** Martin Coles

■ T: 07836 622811

**Accrington & Rossendale :**

Brian Enderwitz ■ T: 07976 353920

**Yale, Wrexham:** Steve Davies

■ T: 07984 002632

**Acton & West London :**

Jim Gallagher ■ T: 07768 745787

**National Construction College, Erith,**

Kent. Malcolm Harrison

■ T: 01322 349638

### Fitting courses



The Academy of Flooring Skills

**THE ACADEMY OF FLOORING SKILLS** (TAOFS) established by John

Roberts has a training centre in

Pentlow near Sudbury, Suffolk.

Courses: Luxury vinyl tile skills **Mar**

**23-27, Jun 8-11;** essential carpet

skills **Mar 9-13, May 25-29;** safety

vinyl skills **Apr 20-23;** moisture

survey skills **Mar 27, Jun 12;**

subfloor preparation skills **Jun 22-23;**

laminated & floating wood skills **May**

**4-5;** intermediate carpet skills **Apr 6-**

**10;** cushion vinyl skills **May 6-7.** The

dates can be changed to suit five or

more people and one-to-one tuition

can be arranged on request. Check the

website for dates of wood courses

in Cornwall. ■ M: 07831584334

■ E: john@jroberts.co.uk

■ T: 01162608873

■ www.taofs.co.uk

### O2H2 Flooring Consultants

Seminar dates this year include:

Understanding carpets **Mar 23-24; Jul**

**13-14; Oct 5-6;** Estimating & planning

**Mar 25-26; Jul 15-16; Oct 7-8.**

Course fees (per seminar) are £275

(plus VAT). Both courses booked

together are £500 (plus VAT).

■ T: 01386 422256

www.o2h2flooringconsultants.com

### HCTS MERSEY ACADEMY

Apprentice training for NVQ for local

CITB and a few non-CITB employers,

plus day release courses for local

flooring firms. Shirley Ashcroft

■ T: 0151 289 9090

### CERAMIC ADHESIVES

**ARDEX** Luke Kingston

■ T: 01440 714939

**BAL** Amy Rushton

■ T: 01782 591123

**BOSTIK** Gary Hardy

■ T: 07735 271664

**INSTARMAC** Paul Luff

■ T: 01827 872244

**MAPEI** Graham Baldwin

■ T: 0121 508 6970

### PALACE CHEMICALS

Stewart Hagger or Jim Percival

■ T: 0151 486 6101

### CLEANING

**IIRC UK** ■ T: 01763 208222

Carpet Cleaning Technician **Apr 28-**

**29; Jun 23-24; Oct 27-28.**

Commercial Carpet Maintenance

Technician **Jul 14-15; Nov 17-18.**

Courses are Royston, Cambridgeshire

(Alltec Network) T: 01763 208222

Instructor is Paul Pearce (Country

House Carpet Care)

E: paulpea@btopenworld.com

### CLEANING SYSTEMS UK

Sandy Pearson ■ T: 0800 163555

■ sandy@cleaning-systems-uk.com

### DR SCHUTZ

Richard Nelson

■ T: 01296 437827

■ richard@dr-schutz.com

### NATIONAL CARPET CLEANERS

**ASSOCIATION** Carpet cleaning **Apr**

**24-25; Jun 12-13.** The course is led

by NCCA directors Paul Pearce and

Pawlo Woloszyn, both experienced

carpet cleaners. Spot & stain removal

course **Mar 27** in Leicester.

■ T: 0116 271 9550

■ www.ncca.co.uk

### PREMIER PRODUCTS

Cleaning, floor preparation and

maintenance courses: **Mar 24-25.**

Contact Maureen Scott.

■ T: 01242 537174

■ maureens@premierproducts.co.uk

### PROCHEM

Carpet cleaning courses:

(2-day) **Mar 24-25; Jun 2-3, Sep 29-**

**30; Nov 24-25.** (1-day) **Mar 17, Apr**

**21, May 19, Jun 16, Jul 14, Sep 8,**

**Oct 6, Nov 3, Dec 8.** Hard floor

cleaning: **Mar 4, May 12, Jul 1, Sep**

**16, Nov 11.** ■ T: 020 8974 1515

■ www.prochem.co.uk/training.htm

### PROCLEAN

David Jenkins

■ T: 02380 660977

### HARDWOOD FLOORS

**BONA:** Introduction to basic sanding:

**Mar 12, Apr 16, May 14, June 18,**

**July 16, Aug 13, Sept 17, Oct 15,**

**Nov 12, Dec 17;** Finishes for timber

floors: **Mar 19, May 21, Jul 23, Sep**

**24, Nov 19;** Success with timber

floors: **Apr 8, Jun 12, Aug 7, Oct 9,**

**Dec 4;** Floors in educational

establishments: **Jun 30, Aug 18, Oct**

**30;** How to service your Bona sanding

machine: **Apr 30, Oct 23, Dec 8.**

■ www.bona.com

■ T: 01908 399740

**JUNCKERS** Steve Maltby

■ T: 01376 534700

**GRUNDORF TERHURNE**

Two-day hardwood and engineered

courses, one-day laminate, and two-

day sand & finish. Sid Bourne.

■ T: 01562 861351

■ M: 07841 500940

**KÄHRS** ■ T: 023 9245 3045

**OSMO** Training is offered on floor

preparation, methods of application of

Osmo products and maintenance.

■ T: 01296 481220

### TIMBER FLOOR TECHNOLOGY

■ T: 01255 224776

■ E: info@timber-floor-technology.co.uk

### RESILIENT FLOORS

**ALTRO** Two-day resilient flooring

courses. ■ T: 01462 707600

Two-day courses on resin flooring:

Debbie Kavanagh

■ T: 01300 320620

### AMTICO

Resilient fitting courses.

Marie Lane. ■ T: 0121 745 0821

### FORBO

has one-day installation

courses. ■ T: 01592 647396

### NORA RUBBER FLOORING

Shaun Howarth ■ T: 01455 200500

**KARNDEAN** ■ T: 01386 820170

**MAPEI** ■ T: 0121 508 6970

**POLYFLOR** ■ T: 0161 767 1111

### TARKETT TRAINING ACADEMY

■ T: 01622 854040

### SURFACE PREP

**ARDEX** Luke Kingston

■ T: 01440 714939

**F BALL** ■ T: 01538 361633

**LAYBOND** Martin Cummins

■ T: 07740 278631

**INSTARMAC** Karl Brannigan

■ T: 01827 872244

**MAPEI** ■ T: 0121 508 6970

**SPE** ■ T: 01673 860709

### THE PREPARATION GROUP

Introduction to surface preparation

**Mar 4;** floor removal processes **Mar**

**12;** advanced operators **Mar 25;**

polishing & grinding techniques **Mar**

**19;** general maintenance (½ day)

**Mar 19.** ■ T: 0870 224 3606

### UZIN

Kenton Penny

■ T: 01235 534106

### FLOORING GUILD

■ T: 0800 072 3223

■ www.flooring-guild.co.uk

## DIARY DATES

### OFFICE EXHIBITION

**March 3-5** Dubai

www.theofficeexhibition.com

For British participation contact the

BCFA T: 01494 896790

E: enquiries@bcfa.org.uk

### ECOBUILD

**March 3-5** Earls Court, London

www.ecobuild.co.uk

### CLEANING SHOW

**March 10-12** NEC, Birmingham

www.cleaningshow.co.uk

### WORKWEAR SHOW

**April 1-2** NEC Birmingham

www.workwearshow.co.uk

### INTERIOR FIT-OUT SHOW

**April 1-2** ExCel, London

www.workwearshow.co.uk

### COVERINGS

**April 21-24** Chicago, USA

www.coverings.com

### DUBAI WOOD SHOW

**April 21-23** Dubai

www.dubaiwoodshow.com

### WOOD FLOOR EXPO

**April 28 - May 1**

Long Beach, California, USA

www.nwfa.org

www.kbbreviewexpo.com

### DOMOTEX MIDDLE EAST

**May 12-14**

Dubai, UAE

www.domotex.de

## CPD courses

Flooring firms offering CPD courses:

Altro ■ T: 01462 489568

Amtico ■ T: 0121 745 0821

Antron ■ T: 07876 577317

Ardex ■ T: 01440 714939

ASCER ■ T: 0207 467 2385

BAL ■ T: 01782 591100

Ball & Young ■ T: 01536 200502

Bona ■ T: 01908 399740

Bonar Floors ■ T: 01773 744121

Brintons ■ T: 01562 635110

Burmatex ■ T: 01924 276333

Desso ■ T: 01235 554848

Dulux Trade ■ E: dtc@ici.com

FeRFA ■ T: 01252 739149

Flowcrete ■ T: 01270 753000

Forbo ■ T: 01592 643777

F Ball ■ T: 01538 361633

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