

## Case Study

# SEI Investments



### Details

Location: Oaks, PA  
Description: 300,000 square-feet of  
ECOsurfaces  
Flooring Choice:  
ECOsurfaces various color  
patterns

### Project Needs

Functional versatility  
Ease of maintenance  
Cutting-edge design capabilities  
Environmentally sustainable

### Project Benefits

Underfoot support  
Simplified maintenance  
Extensive design and color options  
Sustainable

# The Challenge of A Fluid Business Model and Atmosphere Met With the Use of ECOsurfaces

SEI Investments in Oaks, Pennsylvania, is not your ordinary button-down financial organization. A company with no walls and no secretaries, they consider teamwork more than a buzzword: it's a fundamental approach to organization. Project-based teams are assembled and disbanded regularly as the workflow demands. Employees are always moving throughout the company, literally and metaphorically. Designing a workspace to support this fluid business model was the challenge for architect Jeffrey Scherer of Meyer Scherer & Rockcastle.

Practically speaking, the space had to efficiently accommodate frequent moves. Aesthetically, it needed to reflect the progressive, contemporary outlook of SEI. The resulting design conspicuously lacks cubicles, corner offices, and other standard units of corporate space. Instead, large, open work bays feature umbilical-like data connections suspended from the ceiling, a full complement of wheeled office furniture, and underneath it all, ECOsurfaces Commercial Flooring.

Why ECOsurfaces? The idea of a workspace that constantly reshapes itself poses a unique challenge to flooring. Rolling desks, chairs,

and file cabinets cause a lot of stress. It takes an especially durable choice to maintain its appearance after years of such treatment. With unmatched resilience and resistance to scuffs and indentations, ECOsurfaces was up to the challenge, and because of its solid, single-ply construction, the color wears consistently through the life of the product. The SEI installation also demanded versatility. ECOsurfaces isn't just in the main work areas. It also covers meeting rooms, presentation areas, hallways, stairwells, elevators, the cafeteria, the fitness room, and a children's play area. This consistency was made possible by the diversity of the ECOsurfaces line, which includes unique looks like ECOearth and ECOstone as well as products for specific applications like ECONights for Sport and ECOcomfort underlayment for safety in children's areas.

"The ECOsurfaces product line was broad enough to give us the design flexibility we were looking for," says Lynn Barnhouse, Associate Principal and Head of Interiors at MS&R. "We were able to produce a number of unique, innovative patterns using the huge array of colors and visual textures. The extensive use of one product unified the overall design." Environmental concerns also ranked high on

the list of priorities for the company's headquarters, and ECOsurfaces was a perfect choice from an ecological point of view. Made from post-consumer SBR tire rubber and pre-consumer ColorMill® EPDM flecks, ECOsurfaces can potentially contribute points under the LEED® rating system for recycled content and low-emitting materials. ECO International's™ manufacturing process uses minimal water, reuses scrap to decrease waste, requires no smokestacks and avoids heat during production. "Environmental responsibility was a priority for us and the client," Barnhouse maintains. "We also wanted ease of maintenance and acoustical absorption equal to carpet. The fact that ECOsurfaces is made from recycled rubber sealed the decision for us."

Seven years after completion of the project, SEI Investments stands as a monument to corporate creativity and architectural beauty. ECOsurfaces covers over 300,000 square feet at SEI Investments, and every inch looks as good as the day it was installed. In fact, the architects, designers and facilities managers involved were so pleased with its performance, they chose ECOsurfaces for a recent three-building expansion.

