A modern hallway with a polished, light-colored floor that reflects the overhead lights. The walls are a mix of wood paneling and grey panels. A blue carpeted area is visible on the left side of the hallway. The ceiling has recessed lighting.

**WHICH FLOORING IS
BETTER THAN VINYL
FOR AGED CARE?**



About the author

Before we begin, I thought I'd take just a moment to introduce myself. My name is Jack Josephsen and I'm Managing Director of Real World Epoxies, which is a resin flooring supply company I started over 20 years ago because I love to do one thing: solve problems.

With every project being different to the next, and so many different types of flooring systems out there, there has certainly been no shortage of problems to solve. While my work in this area has included formulating and manufacturing products, managing large commercial installations, and helping to develop industry training programs, there is one particular type of problem solving that gives me more satisfaction than anything else.

That is: helping people overcome their individual flooring challenges by looking at other options to the traditional flooring finishes – timber, carpet, tile and vinyl.

In fact everywhere I go, I find myself looking at floors. I look at the cleanability, the slip resistance, the wear, and the damage; at what areas are working well, and what areas aren't holding up. Most importantly, I'm always thinking what could've been done differently or perhaps more effectively with a different type of flooring system.

It drives my wife absolutely crazy, but it's just what I do.

Having shed some light on who I am, hopefully you can see where this report is coming from and what my intentions are. Over the years I've had many personal experiences, and heard of countless others, where flooring projects in aged care facilities have had problems that could've been avoided by using something more suitable.

This isn't to say that vinyl is bad or wrong – it will continue to play a major role and is suited to many areas within the spectrum of aged care applications. Problems arise, however, when vinyl is viewed as the answer to EVERYTHING. That's when a problem solver like me sees a great opportunity to help by simply sharing an alternative that can lead to better results in certain projects.

That is the aim of this report and I hope it achieves that for you and your aged care facility.

Take care and keep smiling,



Jack Josephsen
Managing Director
Real World Epoxies Pty Ltd



Vinyl flooring has been the system of choice in aged care facilities for a long time. From foyers and dining areas, to kitchens and even some wet spaces, it's been called upon time and time again.

With such widespread use and long-term popularity, it'd be reasonable to assume that this type of flooring had offered consistent, trouble-free service across all of these applications during that period. The truth is it hasn't. In fact, most aged care facilities would tell you that while some areas have been a big success with vinyl, others have caused regular headaches.

Before we start looking at these problematic areas, I just want to explain how this kind of scenario comes about and the importance of getting the first step of any project right – the specification.

The right floor, for the right job

For those unfamiliar with the term, the main role of a specification is to collect all the information needed so that you can confidently choose the right flooring system for your project.

In my experience, this task is done most effectively when split into two separate parts:

1. The floor specification – understand what type of floor you need by defining two things: what you're trying to achieve by putting a floor down, and, what the expectations, conditions and restrictions of the project are.

2. The sub-floor specification – understand the type of floor you already have. In some cases, flooring selection will be heavily influenced by what can or can't be done with the sub-floor.

The fact is that every flooring system has its advantages and disadvantages that make them more suitable for certain projects and conditions than others. The common practice of copying "similar" floors, or locking in a system because it's been used elsewhere, only leads to trouble because all projects are different. You really need to take the time to work through the requirements of each project and choose a flooring system on merit and merit alone.

When it comes to vinyl and aged care facilities, it appears as though this process has been ignored to a certain degree and the common practice is push ahead with vinyl regardless. As already highlighted, this has created a situation when some floors have performed well, while others have struggled to meet the demands. Let's take a closer look at what has and hasn't worked.

Where vinyl has worked...

Just to make sure we're all on the same page, vinyl flooring is a synthetic cousin of linoleum (or "lino") and comes in two types: sheet vinyl and vinyl tile.

Both types offer a good mix of water and stain resistance, versatility, and provide good durability for the cost. While sheet flooring is typically more water resistant and easier to install, the tile replicates the look of a ceramic tile floor and is generally lower in cost, which makes it the preference for many residential and commercial projects.

In addition to those properties, there are a few others that have helped it gain popularity in the aged care industry. The sheet vinyl is able to be shaped to run up the walls to make it easier to clean at



the floor/wall junction. The installation process is also relatively quick, taking a few days to prepare the concrete, repair the sub-floor and lay the vinyl.

Perhaps the most well-known feature of vinyl, however, is the feel it provides under foot. The aerated construction gives it a nice level of cushioning and a degree of insulation or warmth.

When I think about those features and benefits, I can see why vinyl has become the “go to” option for what I would describe as light to medium-duty service. For example, the soft feel makes it a great choice for any space that the elderly need to walk through or stand on for extended periods of time. The good durability, stain resistance, and easy-to-clean surface lends itself well to foyers or dining areas that handle foot traffic, light trolley traffic, and even the odd spill or two.

These types of applications and environments are where vinyl is strong and used with good results in a large percentage of projects. The problem as I see it, however, is where the service requirements step up another level to the upper end of medium duty and into the heavy-duty stuff. This is where the unqualified use of vinyl can start to enter a kind of flooring danger zone.

Where vinyl has struggled...

So, what does that danger zone look like for vinyl? Well, there are a number of factors that can make life pretty tough for this type of flooring.

Personally, any time a floor is going to cop repetitive, abrasive traffic, I’m not so sure the wear resistance of vinyl will hold up. If there’s heavy vehicles/machinery, or impact from sharp, heavy objects, I wonder if the floor will suffer from indentation and gouging (and how to repair such damage). If there’s exposure to aggressive chemicals, either during service or routine cleaning, I’m concerned about the chemical and stain resistance. If the environment is constantly hot and humid/wet, I start to think about possible delamination and hygiene issues that come with it.

I’ve put together a collection of photos below that show examples of vinyl being used in these sorts of conditions and the problems that can arise.

 Failing cuts or welds:





☒ Delaminated coving and vertical sections:



☒ Chips, gouges, indentations and cuts:



☒ Staining, cleaning and hygiene issues:





❌ Difficulty in patching and repairing:



As you can probably start to tell from those photos, there are certain types of areas that are more prone to these risk factors than others. Broadly speaking, flooring projects that involve loading zones, warehouse/storage areas, kitchens, toilets, showers/wet spaces, and any other areas similar to these, should be carefully considered because there are more suitable options available.

What's better than vinyl in these areas?

So, what does the answer look like? What type of flooring is better equipped to tackle the types of applications we're talking about?

The answer is resin flooring.

For those that aren't familiar with it, resin flooring is a liquid-applied flooring that's either rolled or trowelled onto concrete. While they may look similar and be applied with similar techniques, please don't confuse resin flooring with standard household paint. They are very different things!

Unlike paint that forms a relatively weak film through the evaporation of solvent, resin flooring involves the crosslinking of polymers to provide an incredibly durable and versatile flooring solution that's been used extensively in the commercial and industrial fields for over half a century.

From food processing to hospitals, retail outlets to automotive workshops, it's proven to be a great option in any space requiring a tough, completely waterproof, easy-to-clean floor that is resistant to spills of just about any chemical thrown at it.

What does this mean for aged care?

That all sounds great, but you're probably wondering what it means for you and your facility. Well, I know from 20 years of personal, hands-on experience that a quality resin floor in the areas we've talked about means something priceless to managers of any kind: peace of mind!

How would it feel to have a wall-to-wall flooring system running in and out of every room without welds, cuts or other points of weakness? One that was tough enough to withstand the wear and tear



of a kitchen, yet stylish and attractive so that it could easily extend out into the dining area as well; a system that was easy to keep clean without harsh chemicals or the hassle of polishing, and, could be repaired without detection or water seeping under the floor?

I realise this might all sound a bit too good to be true, so I'll go into a bit more detail about these benefits and how they are possible with resin flooring.

***Note:** There are lots of variations when it comes to resin flooring, but I'm going to speak specifically about solventless systems. These are by far the best fit for sensitive indoor projects because there are no harmful, pungent solvents released during the hardening process.

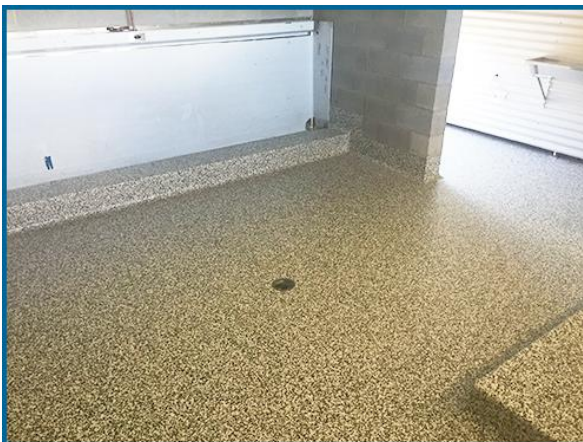
✔ Resin flooring means no cuts or welds

As resin floors are applied as a liquid, they are able to flow around any angles or curves that may feature in certain rooms. This property also makes them a great solution for floors with drains, fixtures or penetrations, all of which are very common in commercial kitchens and the like.



✔ Resin flooring means better coving and verticals

The aim of installing coves and vertical sections is to remove any corners or creases that can harbour dirt, moisture, bacteria and mould. Unlike vinyl that relies on extra sheeting and adhesives, resin flooring allows these features to be done in a continuous manner that leaves nowhere to hide.





✓ Resin flooring means less gouging and easier repairs

In high-impact zones such as a kitchen, a soft film is far too prone to gouging and cuts, which can lead to bigger problems if not effectively repaired. Resin flooring offers two advantages on this front. Firstly, the films are much harder and impact resistant (and can be enhanced by the use of thicker films and/or specialist additives). Secondly, they can be more effectively repaired, so damage doesn't propagate or lead to other issues.



✓ Resin flooring means easier maintenance

Part and parcel of keeping a vinyl floor looking clean and shiny is the regular use of polishes, which represents a significant investment in time and cost. Resin floors can be polished if desired, but the wear resistance means they do a much better job of holding up without having to actively manage it. Now, that doesn't mean that resin floors don't need cleaning. It simply means they tend to show wear and tear less, and measures like polishing are often not required.

✓ Resin flooring means more effective slip resistance

Stopping slips and falls isn't as simple as putting down a textured surface. In fact, the wrong level of non-slip can lead to even more accidents, not to mention potential problems with cleaning etc. With resin flooring you can easily start, stop and adjust the slip rating as required.





✔ Resin flooring means more choice

One of the big advantages resin flooring has over the traditional flooring options like timber, carpet, tiles and vinyl is a virtually unlimited range of colours and designs.

Through the combination of solid colours, flake chips and/or metallic pigment, just about any look is possible. You can create the strong and bold look of granite, or the timeless elegance and style of marble – all for a fraction of what it would cost for the real thing. For those that have grown accustomed to the retro look of vinyl, you can even get something that looks almost identical, but has all the additional benefits of resin flooring we've covered.

When it comes time to pick, most professional installers will offer a set range of styles as a starting point, however truly unique, custom floors can be created to match existing decor or even a brand/logo. Not only that, but with resin flooring you also have the ability to change the finish to get a full-gloss, semi-gloss or matte look.





You can do better than vinyl right now!

As I mentioned in the introduction, this report was never about trying to prove that one particular flooring system was better than another. Such an exercise would be a waste of time anyway because I know from my years of experience in the flooring industry that they ALL have their pros and cons, and there isn't one system that can do it all.

What I was trying to do was explore what appears to be an over-reliance on vinyl in the aged care industry, and shine the light on the fact there are better options out there when it comes to specific flooring areas.

One of those better options is resin flooring.

As you've seen, this kind of flooring loves when the going gets a bit tougher. Whether that's the daily grind of constant traffic in loading zones and storage areas, or the suffocating heat and humidity of commercial kitchens and wet spaces, resin flooring has proven itself for over 50 years as the leader in these environments.



Yet, despite this long and successful track record, it remains largely ignored by aged care facilities in Australia that still prefer to go with vinyl in many cases. This has led to a host of recurring flooring problems that could easily be avoided if the status quo was challenged.

As a natural-born problem solver who's come across 100s of these very problems, I felt obliged to raise my hand and offer my help. I know resin flooring IS the answer to many of the flooring questions your industry has. I've also seen resin floors used to great effect in the aged care facilities of other countries such as the UK and the US, and feels there's no reason why the same can't be happening here right now.

If you've got a flooring issue and want to see if there's something better than vinyl, please get in touch by taking up my special offer on the next page.



Let's have a chat!

If you'd like to discuss your flooring needs in more detail, please take me up on my offer for a free 30-minute, over-the-phone flooring consultation.


In this session I will answer all your questions and walk you through a process I've created specifically for aged care managers to see if resin flooring is the right fit for your next flooring project.

You can secure your preferred session here:

[Book a Chat](#)





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