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Shaw Ceases Production of Polyvinyl Chloride Replacement Carpet Tile Backing Recognized by the EPA

DALTON, Ga. – June 14, 2004 – Shaw Industries Inc., a Berkshire Hathaway company and the world’s largest carpet manufacturer, announced its exit from Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) carpet backing, effective at the end of this year. Driving the decision is the growth of EcoWorx, a non-PVC carpet backing introduced in 1999. Over the past four years when presented with a choice, customers self-selected the new technology, which reached 70 percent of Shaw’s total carpet tile production by year-end 2003.

Shaw received acknowledgement for EcoWorx from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a recipient of the Presidential Green Chemistry Challenge Award. The honor recognizes Shaw for developing a carpet tile that may be sustainably recycled and has less embodied energy than traditional PVC carpet tiles, while maintaining equal or greater performance.

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Demonstrating Shaw’s commitment to sustainability and innovation, EcoWorx was the result of a product development project with the following criteria:

- energy efficiency
- superior performance
- financial sustainability
- use of sustainable material that meets Cradle-to-Cradle Design Protocol

At its introduction, EcoWorx won the Most Innovative Product Award at NeoCon, the world’s trade fair for interior design and facilities management and rapidly became the backing of choice for Shaw carpet tile customers.

EcoWorx meets the Cradle-to-Cradle Design Protocol, a third-party system created by renowned architect William McDonough and German chemist Michael Braungart that assesses each individual material used in a product to determine whether it’s safe for the ecosystem. Following

nature's organic cycle of renewal, the Cradle-to-Cradle Design Protocol ensures products can be continually broken down and reused again through closed-loop or "cradle-to-cradle" recycling. Rather than using traditional approaches that recycle used carpet into other products that could eventually end up in a landfill, this progressive approach enables Shaw to maintain continuous responsibility for product material.

To ensure EcoWorx remains in this continuous loop, the product is backed by an environmental guarantee. Shaw guarantees it will pick up EcoWorx at the end of its life, at no charge to the customer, and recycle it into more EcoWorx, enabling the company to use the same materials in a perpetual loop.

"EcoWorx is a product everyone can feel good about-- it saves carpet from landfills, saves the end user from transportation and tipping fees, and reduces our dependency on new raw material," said Merritt. "It's the total package product."

About Shaw

Shaw Industries, the world's largest carpet manufacturer, produces and sells carpet, rugs, ceramic, hardwood and laminate flooring for residential and commercial applications throughout the world. Shaw's commercial brands include Shaw Specified Commercial, Patcraft and Designweave. For more information about Shaw Industries, visit www.shawfloors.com.

A subsidiary of Berkshire Hathaway Inc., Shaw is headquartered in Dalton, Ga. The company, with 30,000 employees, manufactures more than 600 million square yards of floor covering annually.

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