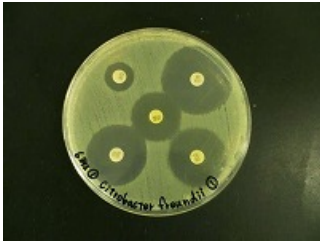


Rockfon MediCare ceilings range assists in reducing the spread of super bugs.



MRSA (Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus) is the name of a group of bacteria that produce a type of infection usually caused by what is commonly referred to as Staph. These bacteria live on the skin and in mucous membranes of humans. Methicillin is a synthetic form of penicillin. The mechanical and molecular structure of penicillin have been replicated to act just like penicillin which is grown naturally.

But now some strains of Staphylococcus Aureus have become resistant to a class of antibiotics frequently used to treat Staph infections, such as Methicillin, and thus are now called Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus or MRSA.

Rockfon is the world's largest manufacturer of high performance acoustic ceiling systems for a wide range of construction industry sectors. The inherent characteristics of the base board of Rockfon ceilings (stone wool) give the product some unique performance advantages compared to mineral fibre panels, especially where high levels of hygiene are demanded. Naturally not containing any organic nutrients puts Rockfon ceilings at an advantage when compared with typically starch bound, cellulose containing, wet-felted mineral fibre ceiling tiles. Also being non-hygroscopic means Rockfon has enhanced resistance to moisture, humidity and attack from micro-organisms thereby ensuring good longevity and continued performance. Over the years many tests have proven Rockfons' unrivalled resistance to ubiquitous micro-organisms and therefore their excellent suitability for use in healthcare and other applications.

The most recent evaluations, at the well-known French laboratory - Cera Labo included some of the new Rockfon MediCare range of products. The testing proved the products' resistance to the widely publicised hospital superbugs - MRSA (Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus) and MSSA (Methicillin Sensitive Staphylococcus Aureus) as well as the recently newsworthy toxic mould - Stachybotrys Chartarum. Unlike many ceiling tiles Rockfon tiles do not need chemical additives in their core nor do they rely on (in some cases intentionally "punctured") surface treatments to provide so-called micro-organism resistance. The thing about stone wool is that it is an inherent quality of the product and it does not rely on so called resistant coatings for its performance and equally does not need perforations or holes subsequently made in its surface to provide high levels of sound absorption.

The challenge of controlling MRSA in hospitals has proved to be great and a complete review of procedures has not always been successful in combating this insidious threat to health. The building elements and design are now being included in the review process and the propensity of certain building surfaces to support the development of micro-organisms will come under scrutiny. Whilst it's fully appreciated that stone wool ceilings alone will not suddenly combat MRSA and other micro-organisms, used as part of the design with appropriate flooring etc. and a package of measures, such as enhanced cleaning and hand washing, then certainly Rockfon stone wool bonded mineral wool ceilings will help to fight MRSA in healthcare buildings. These inherent features combined with pleasing aesthetics, and the best possible fire safety (Euro Class A1 which is a *non-combustible* rating similar to AS 1530 Part 1. and will meet the Building Code of Australia requirements as a *non-combustible* building material) together with excellent acoustics contributing to quieter and more efficient healthcare spaces mean that Rockfon ceilings can make a contribution to the creation of safer and comfortable spaces. All of this performance is backed up by the British Board of Agreement in Certificate No. 04/4139. Rockfon is the only ceiling company to have the BBA certificate that confirms quality and fitness for purpose.

RESISTANCE TO MOULD GROWTH

Among the many tests to which Rockfon ceilings have been subjected, Industrial Microbiological Services Ltd performed extensive tests comparing the resistance of pre-conditioned ceiling tiles to surface mould growth. The products selected for the test were typical untreated (no fungicide added) suspended acoustic ceiling panels, one from the Rockfon range and one from a leading brand of mineral fibre.

Essentially the samples were inoculated with a consortium of fungi then incubated under humid conditions (>98% RH) to stimulate their growth. The fungi used in the test represent the major species isolated from coated surfaces in both interior and exterior environments and include species known to be allergenic in man. The following photographs show the degree of mould resistance after incubation for 6 weeks.



ROCKFON

Some sparse signs of spore germination after 6 weeks however no extensive fungal growth resulted



MINERAL FIBRE

The tiles supported extensive fungal growth over the entire surface. This growth was present within 2 weeks of incubation and increased in intensity during the following 4 weeks

Rockfon MediCare

The MediCare range of ceiling products is marketed by Australasian Insulation Supplies Pty Ltd and is distributed in the locations listed below.

All products in the range have a durable white painted surface, incorporating a fungicide to resist the growth of bacteria at the surface and ensure clean-ability. The 100% stone wool base board is inorganic and cannot be attacked by rot or fungi. All products in the range will withstand frequent washing. MediCare Ultra will withstand frequent low or high pressure washing.

For further information on the Rockfon MediCare range contact your local distributor.

Marketed in Australia by AUSTRALASIAN INSULATION SUPPLIES PTY LTD

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