

# Homes on Johnsons Pond



HOMES ON JOHNSONS POND, NON-PROFIT SENIOR HOUSING, SALISBURY, MARYLAND

## PRODUCT CATEGORIES

### PAINT

SHERWIN-WILLIAMS PROMAR  
ZERO VOC

### COUNTERTOPS

NAUF SUBSTRATE

### CABINETS & MILLWORK

SMART CABINETS; NAUF

### INSULATION

KNAUF RESIDENTIAL FIBER-  
GLASS BATT INSULATION;  
FORMALDEHYDE FREE

### DRYWALL

SELECTED PRODUCT WITH LESS  
SYNTHETIC GYPSUM

Homes on Johnsons Pond, located in Salisbury, MD, is an affordable housing community comprised of two three-story buildings with a total of 63 units. The buildings are a mix of one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments and resident amenities, including fitness room, playground, and library. Sustainability elements were based on project's pursuit of the National Green Building Standard (NGBS) certification.

When the partnership between Homes for America and Healthy Building Network's (HBN) HomeFree program began, the specifications for the Homes on Johnsons Pond were already written.

Seeking to make the most of the opportunity, the Homes on Johnsons Pond project team of Harkins Builders and Architecture by Design choose to focus their exploration of healthier materials on paint and flooring. The intent was to be ready with options should

contingency funds become available during construction to allow upgrades to healthier materials.

### PAINT

Working in tandem with the HBN research team, the development team assessed paint options utilizing the HomeFree hazard spectrum while considering cost and performance. The National Green Building Standard (NGBS) is a third-party certification ANSI standard. There are optional points for projects where at least 85% of interior

## RESEARCH HIGHLIGHT

### PAINT

Paint is one of the primary finishes in a home. It covers a large percentage of the interior surface area. Selecting interior paint products that have the fewest hazards possible can have a significant impact on occupants and installers.

Attributes to consider in the selection of interior latex paints are minimizing volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and alkylphenol ethoxylate (APE) free paints.

Look for low VOC content in paints - at a minimum, specify paint bases with a VOC content  $\leq 50$ g/L. Because VOC content misses some VOCs that may be emitted from paints, also look for an emission certification. Colorants can add VOCs and other hazardous content to paints. Prefer paints with colorants that do not increase the VOC content of the base paint when tinted.

APEs are a high priority to avoid due to their toxicity and potential for widespread exposure. Prefer paints that are APE free.

For more information, visit the [Interior Paint Product](#) page on HomeFree.

architectural coatings meet either a low VOC content or low VOC emission requirement. The VOC content limits are less restrictive than recommended in the HomeFree hazard spectrum, allowing 50 g/L for flat coatings, 100 g/L for non-flat coatings, and 150 g/L for high gloss coatings.

The assessment determined that the Sherwin-Williams ProMar Zero VOC was a good fit for the project. The \$2,600 cost increase over the original product was minimal in light of the positive impact of choosing the healthier option.

### FLOORING

The original flooring specification for the resident units included multiple options for Luxury Vinyl Tile (LVT). Homes for America asked HBN to recommend flooring products that rank higher on the hazard spectrum.

The two alternate products selected for further evaluation were a linoleum flooring, Forbo Marmoleum, and a biobased flooring, Upofloor Xpressions. While the project team was drawn to the health benefits of these two products, other factors did not meet selection criteria. This particular linoleum was deemed too prone to denting for a community targeted to families. The biobased floor's health attributes of being free of PVC and plasticizers were desirable, but the significant cost increase compared to the LVT exceeded funds made available by contingency. The process of vetting these potential materials was informative for all in-

involved and who will carry the information forward to the next project.

### CHANGING PRACTICE

The understanding gained working with HomeFree during the pilot led Homes for America to implement a requirement for Zero VOC paint across its entire portfolio of over 5,600 units. This single change will impact employees and residents by decreasing exposure to hazardous volatile chemicals such as asthmagens and chemicals that may interfere with hormone function.



FOR MORE INFORMATION and WAYS TO ACT, VISIT: [homefree.healthybuilding.net](https://homefree.healthybuilding.net)

Neither HBN nor its HomeFree program endorses or certifies products. The specific products noted have not been reviewed or endorsed by HBN. They are included for informational purposes, and demonstrate choices made by HomeFree users based on multiple factors including cost and availability, utilizing HomeFree guidance to make healthier material choices within project constraints.