

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **US District Court of Delaware rules Välinge's Mannington Patents in the US are invalid, with immediate effect**

- *All Mannington patents removed from Halstead/Home Depot case*
- *Välinge effectively blocked from enforcing asserted Mannington patents in the US*
- *Claim construction ruling favours Halstead and Home Depot*

WILLEMSTAD, CURAÇAO – I4F, a group of companies providing patents and technologies to the flooring industry, today shared details relating to a significant decision on Välinge's asserted Mannington patents in the US. The United States Court for the District of Delaware ruled that four Mannington patents from Välinge are invalid in the US, with immediate effect. The Court made the ruling in a case brought by Välinge alleging infringement against Halstead and Home Depot.

The Court specifically determined that the phrase “not susceptible to damage caused by moisture” which appears in every independent claim of the involved Mannington patents is indefinite. Consequently, each claim of every asserted Mannington patents is now invalid in the United States, regardless of the claim construction (also called “Markman” in the US) outcome on the other contested claim terms. The decision effectively prevents Välinge from enforcing these now invalidated Mannington patents in the US.

Other than in the Mannington patents, the parties disputed only four other claim terms, where two disputes were decided in favor of Halstead and Home Depot. While Välinge will have the opportunity to appeal, I4F believes the Delaware Court's invalidity decision is correct and does not expect an appeals decision before the patents expire. In the meantime, the Mannington patents are invalid with immediate effect and are expected to remain invalid, even after appeal.

Additionally, in Europe, I4F has filed a nullity action based on prior art in Germany against Mannington patent EP'665, a European patent in the invalidated U.S. Mannington patent family.

## ends ##

**Contact:**

Gilliane Palmer  
+31 6 4189 9515  
gilliane@innovations4flooring.com

**About I4F:**

*I4F is an innovations group focused on the development of patents and technologies for the flooring industry. Its portfolio includes IP for flooring installation and wall mounting systems, material compositions, surface treatment as well as laminate and board production technologies. I4F has strategic partnerships with the industry's most important IP players, including Classen, Kronospan, UWC and Kowon. The company's flagship technologies, 3L TripleLock and Click4U, provide a unique one piece drop-lock installation technique for flooring panels that eliminates the need for an additional insert on the short side. The solution is suitable for laminate, luxury vinyl tiles, wood plastic composite, rigid core flooring, multi-layer flooring and wooden flooring panels. International patents and patent applications for I4F's technologies have been granted and filed in over 100 countries worldwide.*

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