

# NSF Certified Surfacing Materials Explained

NSF International, The Public Health and Safety Organization, is a global independent organization that develops public health standards for products in the food, water, health sciences and consumer goods industries. Manufacturers of products from around the globe, including solid surfacing companies, seek NSF International certification by submitting their products to NSF for evaluation and testing to these standards. If full compliance to all NSF requirements is met, the products receive an official NSF certification listing and are permitted to use the NSF certification mark in association with the certified products.

The NSF Food Equipment Certification Program has 22 different food equipment standards that establish the minimum food protection and sanitation requirements for the materials, design, fabrication, construction and performance of food handling and processing equipment.

Solid surfacing materials are reviewed to NSF/ANSI 51: Food Equipment Materials, which details the public health requirements for materials used in the construction of commercial food equipment. This standard contains requirements for toxicological safety, smoothness, cleanability and corrosion resistance of the materials.

The NSF food equipment standards are designed in manner that classifies different surfaces or areas of equipment into defined zones of exposure.

- **Food zones** are areas intended to be exposed to direct food contact or surfaces which consumable food or condensation may contact and then drain, drip or splash back onto food or food contact surfaces. Materials certified for use in a food zone are also suitable for use in splash and nonfood zones.
- **Splash zones** are areas that are exposed to routine soiling from splashes and spills but are not surfaces intended for contact with consumable food. Materials

certified for splash zones are not certified for use in food zones.

- **Nonfood zones** are areas that are not exposed to food or splashes but may be subject to some minor dirt and debris.

Requirements for NSF/ANSI 51 certification differ by zone; while all solid surfacing is evaluated for the smoothness, cleanability and corrosion resistance requirements, only solid surfacing certified for food zones meets the requirements for toxicological safety. Based on this, the NSF certification listings for NSF/ANSI 51: Food Equipment Materials are formatted to indicate the zone of intended end use in the heading for each product listing.

Reference the online NSF/ANSI 51 certification listing at <http://info.nsf.org/Certified/Food/> to determine what zones NSF certified solid surfacing may be used in. Surfacing materials that are certified for use in food zones may be used for countertops, table tops or other surfaces in which food contact is intended. Surfacing materials certified for splash zones should not be used on any surfaces intended for food contact.

The NSF online certification listings are updated each business day and are the only official source of information that should be utilized to obtain information about NSF certified products.



**For more information, please contact +1.877.893.1325 or [foodequipmentinfo@nsf.org](mailto:foodequipmentinfo@nsf.org).**