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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS  
WASHINGTON, D. C.  
SEPTEMBER 26, 1934.

Letter Circular  
LC-425  
(Superseding #359)

SOUND ABSORPTION COEFFICIENTS OF THE MORE COMMON MATERIALS.

The following figures have been obtained at the National Bureau of Standards for the sound absorption coefficients of a number of materials now on the market as acoustic correctives. The inclusion of a material in this letter circular is not to be construed as a general approval. Each material should be judged on its merits in any particular case as there are other requirements such as fire resisting qualities; light reflection, appearance, etc. Figures are also given for the absorption of an audience seated in chairs of different kinds. All the results have been obtained by the reverberation method.

The sound absorption coefficient of a material is defined as the fractional part of the energy of a sound wave which is absorbed at each reflection. Experimental figures such as are given here must be regarded as approximate only. This branch of applied science is new and in a state of development. The methods and formulas used in obtaining these figures are those which, while not entirely satisfactory, are open to the least objection. The uncertainty involved is such that all the coefficients are probably somewhat too large.

The "noise coefficient" given in the table is the average of the coefficients for 256, 512, 1024 and 2048 cycles. It has been recommended by many consultants that such a coefficient be used when the problem is one of reducing the noise level, as in offices, restaurants, etc.

Fibrous materials and acoustic tiles may exhibit large variations in coefficient arising from different methods of mounting. The figures here given apply only to cases where the materials are mounted in the same manner as when tested.

Acoustic plasters require special skill in their application, as improper manipulation may reduce the coefficient. Moreover, the figures given for plasters without a base coat will be considerably reduced if a base coat is used.

It is not necessarily the case that the materials of highest coefficient are the most advantageous. When there is room enough to apply the requisite quantity, a material of low coefficient will give better results than one of higher absorption, because of the more uniform distribution of material. Also in comparing different materials it should be borne in mind that there is



some variation in manufacture, hence the sample which was measured may have more or less absorption than the material delivered on the job. Minor differences in coefficients, therefore, should be disregarded in choosing between materials.

For the foregoing reasons it is advisable in drawing up specifications for auditoriums to lay emphasis upon the reverberation time desired rather than upon coefficients of material. See Bureau of Standards Circular #396 entitled "Architectural Acoustics", which may be obtained of the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., at 5 cents per copy. Additional details regarding any of the materials mentioned in this letter circular will be furnished on application.

Additional information regarding the absorption coefficients of acoustical materials may be obtained from the Acoustical Materials Association, 919 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

the following: "The social importance of literary  
works is determined by their influence on the public,  
and the influence of literature on the public is  
exerted through the education and formation of  
the public."

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Sound Absorption Coefficients and Description of Test Samples

Table 1  
Acoustical Tiles, Boards and Blankets.

The coefficients given in the following table have been modified to some extent from those given in previous Letter Circulars. The reason for these changes is to be found in the August, 1934 number of the Journal of Research of the National Bureau of Standards (Research Paper No. 700) entitled "Dependence of Sound Absorption upon the Area and Distribution of the Absorbent Material".

ACOUSTICAL CORPORATION OF AMERICA									
Material	Thickness (See Footnote)	Mounting (See Footnote)	Noise Coefficients	Size of Unit Tested	Wt. (lbs) sq.ft.	Surface	Date		
Mutetile (2" Rockwool)	2 1/2"	4	.53 .71 .80 .78 .76 .45 .75	12" x 12"	--	Cast plaster of paris perforated 2556 holes per sq.ft., dia. 1/16"	1932		
ACOUSTONE COMPANY, LTD.									
Frutone Tile, cast on $\frac{1}{4}$ " gypsum	7/8"	4	.16 .17 .48 .82 .65 .74 .55	12" x 24"	--	Spray painted by manufacturer.	1932		
AMERICAN ACOUSTIC CORPORATION									
Ek-O-less Tile, cast on 1" backing	3/4"	4	.22 .31 .66 .82 .74 .76 .65	11 7/8" x 22 7/8"	11 7/8" x 22 7/8"	Unpainted	1932		
Ek-O-less Tile, cast on 1/2" backing	1 7/16"	4	.18 .32 .85 .92 .77 .81 .70	11 7/8" x 22 7/8"	11 7/8" x 22 7/8"	Unpainted	1932		
ARMSTRONG CORK & INSULATION COMPANY									
Ceramacoustic Tile	1 1/8"	1	.34 .48 .63 .66 .65 .58 .60	4 1/2" x 4 1/2" x	9" 9"	Unpainted	1932		
Ceramacoustic Tile	1 1/8"	1	.28 .49 .62 .62 .66 .54 .60	4 1/2" x 4 1/2" x	9" 9"	Spray painted 4 coats at N. B. of S.	1932		
Temlock	1/2"	5	.24 .31 .27 .37 .36 .47 .30	--	--	Unpainted	1931		
				(16" o.c.)					

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ATLANTIC GYPSUM PRODUCTS COMPANY

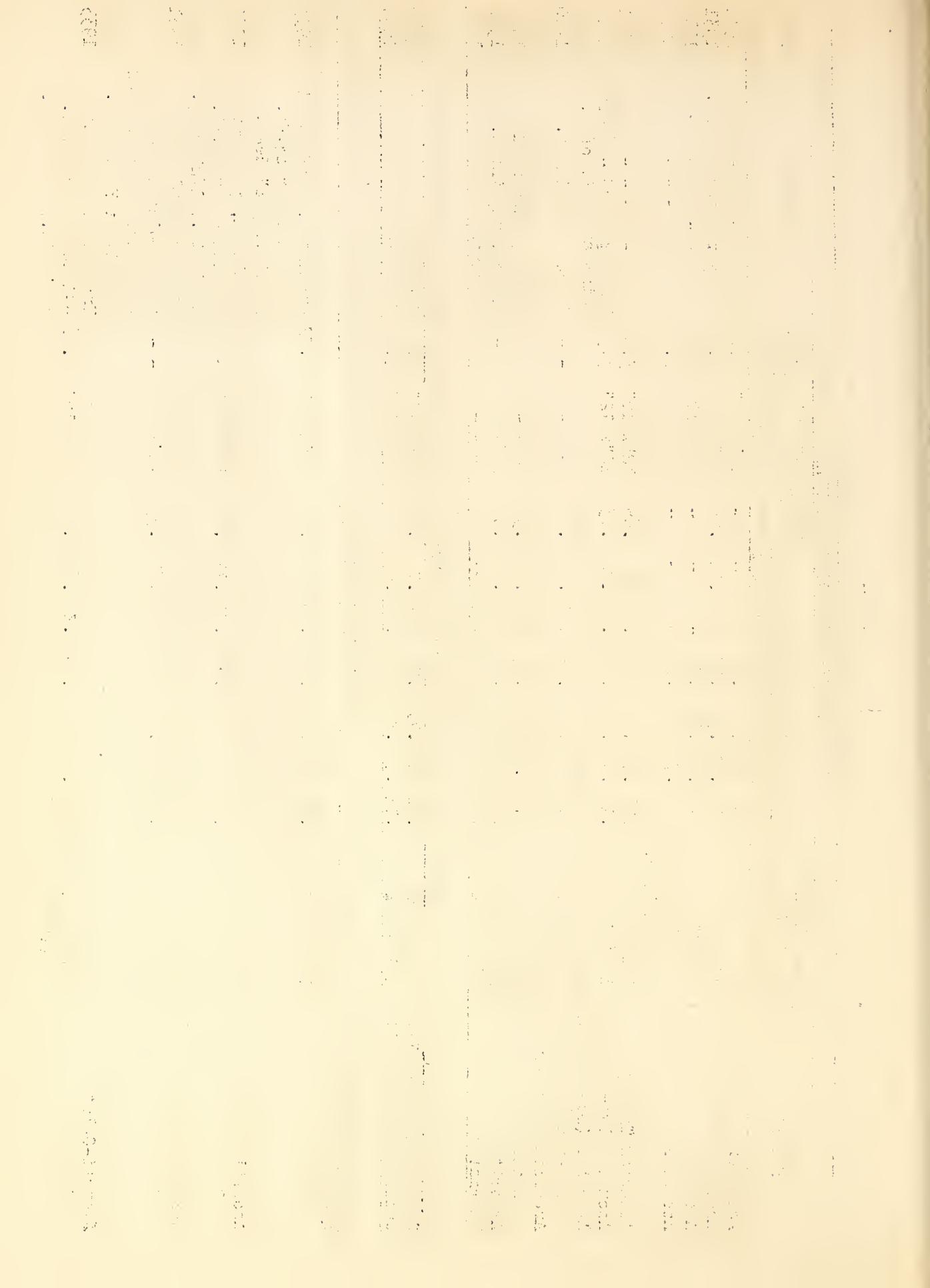
Material	Thickness (See Footnote)	Mounting (See Footnote)	Coefficients	Noise Coef.	Unit tested	Size of Wt. (lbs) sq.ft.	Surface	Date
Acoustex	7/8"	4	.19 .41 .72	—	12" x 12"	2.06	—	1932
Acoustex Type 60	1"	4	.11 .21 .53	.77 .71 .55	12" x 12"	2.5	Spray painted by mfr.	1931
Acoustex	1 1/8"	4	— .25 .53	.79 —	12" x 12"	2.6	—	1932
Acoustex	1 1/8"	5	— .74 .88	.63 —	12" x 12"	2.6	—	1932
(12" o.c.)								
Acoustex Type 70	1 1/2"	4	.16 .34 .72	.80 .79 .87	12" x 12"	3.5	—	1931
Acoustex Type 70	1 1/2"	4	.14 .30 .71	.85 .80 .86	12" x 12"	3.5	Spray painted - 6 coats at N. B. of S.	1931
Arborite (Low density material)	1/2"	2	.21 .48 .34	.31 .41 .46	.40	—	Sanded, unpainted.	1930
Arborite (Regular material)	1/2"	2	.16 .40 .27	.29 .39 .44	.35	—	Sanded, unpainted.	1930
	3/4"	5	.44 .27 .26	.33 .46 .48	.35	24" x 24"	—	1932
	1"	2	.30 .39 .34	.43 .53 .44	.40	—	Sanded, unpainted.	1932
							Unpainted	1930

THE CATECHET COMPANY

Calicel Acoustic Tile 1"	3	.26	.38	.71	.86	.74	.74	.65	12"x 12"	2.5	Unpainted
Calicel Acoustic Tile 1 1/4"	2	.11	.34	.81	.87	.72	.69	.70	12"x 12"	2.6	Unpainted

THE CELESTEK COMPANY

Acousti-Celotex	Type A	1/2"	2	.06	.65	.42	.49	.64	.64	.55	12"x 12"	0.72	Unpainted, perforated 441 holes per sq.ft. 1/4" dia., 3/8" deep.	1933
Acousti-Celotex	Single B	5/8"	1	.08	.18	.48	.52	.72	.77	.50	12"x 12"	--	Unpainted, perforated 441 holes per sq.ft. 1/4" dia., 1/2" deep.	1931
Acousti-Celotex	Single B	5/8"	1	.07	.20	.46	.70	.82	.81	.55	12"x 12"	--	Same as sample above, brush painted 1 coat glue size, 4 coats lead and oil at N.B. of S.	1931
Acousti-Celotex	Single B	5/8"	2	.05	.64	.63	.35	.84	.66	.75	12"x 12"	0.76	Unpainted, perforated 441 holes per sq.ft. 1/4" dia., 1/2" deep.	1933



THE CELOTEX COMPANY (Cont'd.)

Material	Thickness inches	Mounting (See Footnote)	Noise Coefficients	Wt. Unit (lbs.)	Size of Surface	Date
			128 256 512 1024 2048 4096	Coef. Tested	sq. ft.	
Acousti-Celotex	13/16"	1	.15 .24 .62 .73 .70 .71	.55	12"x 12"	Unpainted, perforated 441 holes per sq.ft. 1/4" dia., 5/8" deep.
Double B						Same as sample above, 1931
Acousti-Celotex	13/16"	1	.13 .26 .62 .78 .86 .77	.65	12"x 12"	Unpainted, brush painted 1 coat glue size, 4 coats lead and oil at N. B. of S.
Double B						1931
Acousti-Celotex	13/16"	2	.09 .56 .77 .90 .78 .62	.75	12"x 12"	Unpainted, 441 holes per sq.ft. 1/4" dia., 5/8" deep.
Double B						1933
Acousti-Celotex	1 1/4"	4	.12 .41 .90 .92 .66 .64	.70	12"x 12"	Unpainted, 441 holes per sq.ft. 1/4" dia., 5/8" deep.
Triple B						1932
Acousti-Celotex	13/16"	1	.04 .16 .61 .81 .79 .69	.60	12"x 12"	Unpainted, 441 holes per sq.ft. 1/4" dia., 1" deep.
Double X						1933
R. GUASTAVINO COMPANY						
Akoustolith Tile	1"	4	.08 .13 .25 .54 .67 .42	.40	--	Unpainted
Grade D						1930
Akoustolith Tile	2"	4	.15 .26 .59 .74 .52 .50	.55	--	Unpainted
Grade D						1930
Akoustolith Tile	1 1/2"	4	.12 .19 .44 .61 .66 .56	.50	6"x 12"	7.5
Grade C						1930
Akoustolith Tile	2"	4	.19 .26 .53 .64 .70 .56	.55	6"x 12"	10.1
Grade C						1930
Akoustolith Tile	1"	4	.09 .17 .46 .77 .77 .58	.55	6"x 12"	4.6
Grade B-2						1932
Akoustolith Tile	1 1/2"	4	.14 .30 .67 .87 .82 .57	.65	6"x 12"	6.1
Grade B-2						1932
Akoustolith Tile	2"	4	.21 .50 .85 .81 .70 .70	.70	6"x 12"	8.5
Grade B-2						1932



HAWAIIAN CANE PRODUCTS, LTD.

Material	Thickness (Sec Footnote)	Mounting (Sec Footnote)	Coefficients	Noise Coef.	Unit Tested	Wt. (lbs) sq.ft.	Size of Surface	Date
Hawaiian Cane Tile	1"	2	.10 .40 .09	.78 .2048 .4096	.79 .096	.65 11 1/2"	x 0.75 Unpainted	1933 11 1/2"

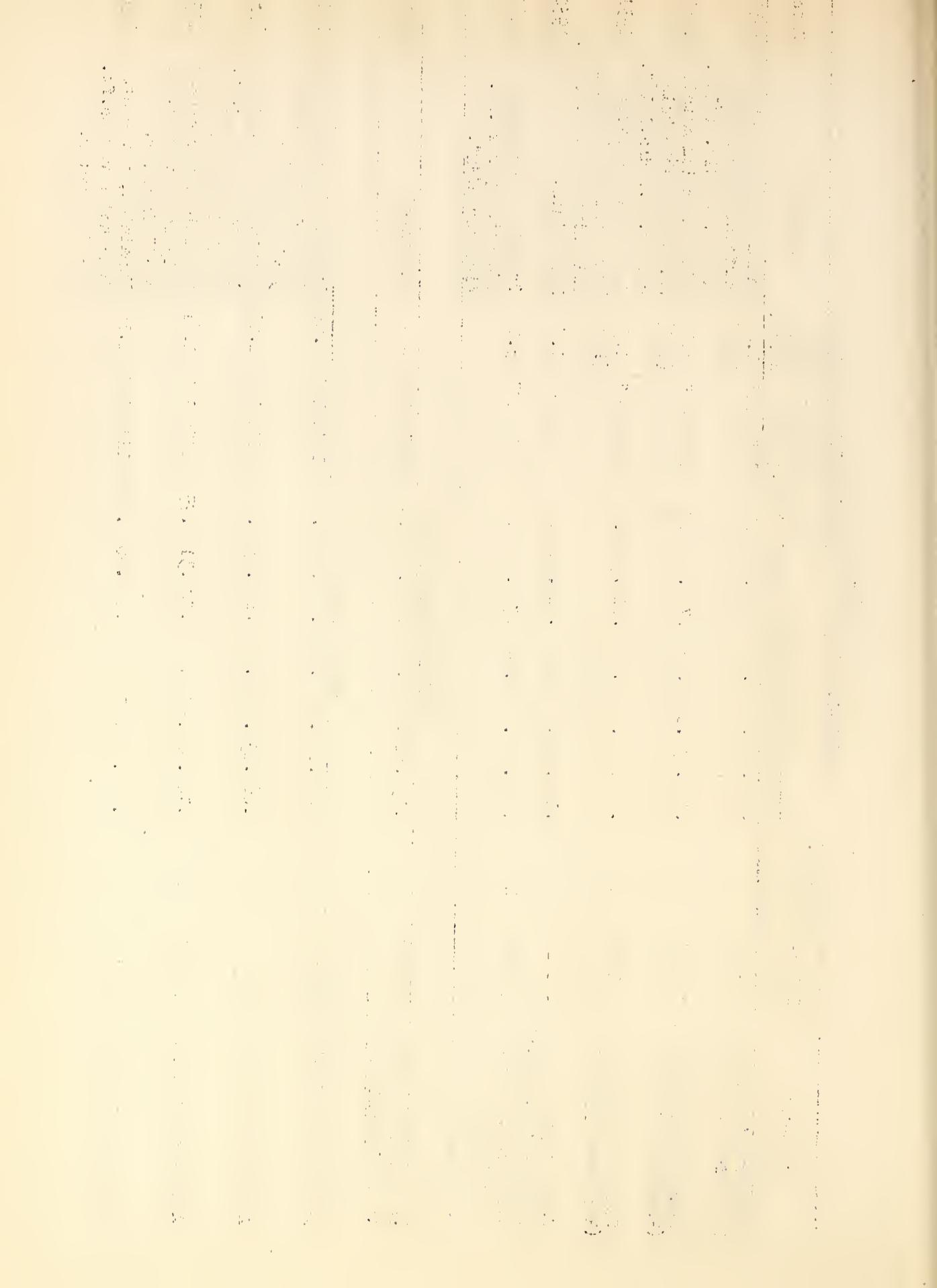
THE INSURER COMPANY

Insulite Acoustile	1 3/4"	4	.26	.42	.50	.57	.61	.59	.55	12"x 12"	1.47	Unpainted	
Type 44													
Nashkote A	1/2"	1	.05	.13	.25	.26	.20	.18	.20	36"x 48"	--	Painted 2 coats	
Nashkote A	1/2"	1	.08	.15	.43	.62	.65	.58	.45	36"x 48"	--	oil paint.	
Nashkote A	3/4"	1	.09	.16	.27	.30	.23	.23	.25	36"x 48"	--	Same as above except 1929 membrane perforated with fine holes after painting.	
Nashkote A	3/4"	1	.11	.21	.51	.68	.71	.68	.55	36"x 48"	--	Painted 2 coats 1929 oil paint.	
Nashkote A	1"	1	.12	.20	.33	.33	.28	.28	.30	36"x 48"	--	Same as above except 1929 membrane perforated with fine holes after painting.	
Nashkote A	1"	1	-	.13	.26	.58	.73	.77	.71	.60	36"x 48"	--	Covered with perforated membrane.
Nashkote B-332	1/2"	1	.09	.15	.31	.52	.74	.63	.45	36"x 48"	--	Covered with perforated membrane.	
Nashkote B-332	3/4"	1	.12	.21	.40	.63	.81	.73	.50	36"x 48"	--	Covered with perforated membrane.	
Nashkote B-332	1"	1	.19	.26	.51	.73	.89	.77	.60	36"x 48"	--	Covered with perforated membrane.	



JOHNS-MANVILLE SALES CORPORATION (Cont'd.)

Material	Thickness	Mounting (See Footnote)	Coefficients	Noise	Unit	Size of Wt.	Surface	Date
			128 256 512 1024 2048 4096	Coef. Tested	sq.ft.	(lbs)		
Sanacoustic Tile (Rock Wool Filler)	1 1/4"	4	.17 .41 .82 .94	.35 .55	.75	12"x 12"	1.6	Baked enameled metal, per sq.ft., dia. 1/16".
Sanacoustic Tile (Rock Wool Filler)	1 1/4"	2	.19 .63 .82	.76	.57	12"x 24"	1.3	Baked enameled metal, per sq.ft., dia. 1/15".
Sanacoustic Tile (Rock Wool Filler)	1 1/4"	2	.17 .49 .79	.75	.81	12"x 24"	1.3	Same as above except brush painted 3 coats oil paint at N. B. of S.
Sound Isolation Blanket (Rock Wool)	-- --	4	.11 .58 .85	.83	.81	12"x 24"	1.5	Metal lath.
Transite Acoustical Tile	1 1/8"	4	.19 .39 .77	.74	.70	12"x 12"	3.0	Transite, perforated 576 holes per sq.ft. diameter 5/32".
KALITE COMPANY, LTD.								
Kalite Tile, cast on 1/2" backing.	1 1/2"	4	.15 .32 .50	.52	.40	12"x 12"	--	Unpainted
Amblercoustile No. 2	3/4"	1	.04 .17 .49	.81	.74	.60	.88	Unpainted, perforated 1013 holes per sq.ft. 3/32" diameter.
Amblercoustile No. 2	1"	1	.06 .29 .66	.92	.81	.33	1.09	Unpainted, perforated 1013 holes per sq.ft. 3/32" diameter.
Amblercoustile No. 2	1 1/2"	1	.12 .42 .87	.92	.70	.31	1.61	Unpainted, perforated 1013 holes per sq.ft. 3/32" diameter.
Amblercoustile No. 4	3/4"	1	.04 .22 .57	.84	.85	.60	1.14	Unpainted, perforated 1013 holes per sq.ft. 3/32" diameter.



KEASEY & MATTISON (Cont'd.)

Material	Thickness Footnote	Mounting (See Footnote)	Coefficients 128 256 512 1024 2048 4096	Noise Coef.	Size of Unit Tested	Wt. (lbs) sq.ft.	Surface	Date
Amblercoustic No.4	1"	1	.08 .30 .75 .95	.85 .57 .70	12"x 12"	1.49	Unpainted, perforated 1013 holes per sq.ft. 3/32" diameter.	1934
Amblercoustic No.4	1 1/2"	1	.13 .50 .88 .98	.83 .59 .80	12"x 12"	2.28	Unpainted, perforated 1013 holes per sq.ft. 3/32" diameter.	1934

MAIZEWOOD PRODUCTS CORPORATION								
Maizewood Tile	1 1/2"	4	.23 .41 .63	.79 .70 .62	.65 12"x 12"	2.1	12 saw cuts across tile 1" deep.	1932
Maizewood Tile	1 1/2"	4	.21 .41 .64	.73 .70 .58	.60 12"x 12"	2.1	Same sample as above painted 1 coat glue size, 2 coats lead & oil at N. E. of S.	1932

NATIONAL GYPSUM COMPANY								
Acoustolic (Maftek)	1/2"	5	.44 .24 .31 .44	.48 .37 .35	-- -- --	--	Unpainted	1930
Acoustolic	1/2"	5	-- .29 .28 .41	-- .28 .41	-- -- --	--	Tinted with water soluble aniline color	1930
Acoustolic	1/2"	5	.40 .33 .31 .38	.37 .35 .35	-- -- --	--	Painted with water color paint at N.E. of S.	1930
Sphinxstone	2"	4	.10 .33 .78 .87	.71 .70 .65	18"x 24"	--	Unpainted	1932



THERMAX CORPORATION

Material	Thickness	Mounting (See Footnote)	Coefficients			Noise Coef.	Unit Tested	Size of Wt. (lbs.)	Surface	Date
			128	256	512					
Absorbex Type A	1"	1	-	.22	.45	.87	.91	•60	9" x 9"	2.5
Absorbex Type A	1"	2	-	.27	.65	.92	.77	•65	9" x 9"	2.5
Absorbex Type A on 1" Absorbex Type C (10 gauge)	2"	4	-	.39	.80	.96	.92	-	9" x 9" tile on 20" x 64" sheets.	-
Absorbex Type C (14 gauge)	1"	4	.14	.19	.34	.73	.62	.45	20" x 64"	-
Absorbex Type C (14 gauge)	1"	2	.14	.21	.67	.69	.59	.62	.55	20" x 64"
Absorbex Type C (10 gauge)	1"	2	.06	.17	.47	.66	.53	-	.45	20" x 64"
Absorbex Type C (8 gauge)	2"	7	.13	.47	.98	.70	.78	.70	.75	20" x 64"
									4.7	Spray painted 4 coats paint at N. B. of S.

UNITED STATES GYPSUM COMPANY

Acoustone	1/2"	4	.09	.20	.48	.34	.66	.59	.50	12" x 12"	-
Acoustone	3/4"	4	.13	.28	.61	.73	.73	.61	.60	12" x 12"	-
Acoustone	1"	4	.18	.38	.54	.73	.73	.51	.60	12" x 12"	-
Quietile Type 80	1"	4	.06	.47	.76	.74	.72	.76	.65	12" x 12"	0.81
Red Top											Unpainted, brush finish
Acoustic Tile	1/2"	1	.14	.22	.40	.48	.52	.51	.40	12" x 12"	0.55
Thermofil	3"	4	.43	.39	.66	.78	.81	.93	.65	--	No surface covering.
U.S. Gypsum Metal Tile, Rock wool pad.	1 1/2"	4	.12	.56	.91	.87	.78	.70	.80	12" x 12"	1.03 (pad) per sq. ft.
											Painted by manufacturer perforated 2401 holes



WOOD CONVERSION COMPANY

Material	Thickness	Mounting (See Footnote)	Coefficients			Noise Coef.	Unit Tested	Size of Wt. (lbs) sq.ft.	Surface	Date
			128	256	512					
Balsam Wool	1"	4	.18	.36	.55	.05	.67	-.55	-.29	1928
Krextone Tile (Balsam Wool)	1"	6	.12	.24	.62	.73	.73	.78	.60	1931
Nuwood Bevel Lap Tile	1/2"	6	.12	.19	.30	.40	.40	.51	.30	1931
Nuwood Bevel Lap Tile	1"	6	.14	.19	.37	.37	.41	.56	.35	1931
								12"x 12"	0.69	
								12"x 12"	1.4	

FOOTNOTES:

1. Cemented to gypsum wall board. This is considered equivalent to cementing to plaster or masonry.
2. Placed on 13/16" x 2" furring 12" o.c. unless otherwise indicated.
3. Metal supports attached to 13/16" x 2" wood furring.
4. Laid directly on laboratory floor. As a rule the results obtained this way are the same as when the tile is cemented to gypsum wall board.
5. Placed on 2 x 4's 24" o.c. unless otherwise indicated.
6. Cemented to the floor of the reverberation room.
7. Back of sample covered with concrete.



Table 2  
Acoustical Plasters

Unless otherwise stated each sample of acoustical plaster was mixed according to the specifications furnished by the manufacturers and applied by a skilled plasterer. The panels were laid on the floor of the Sound Chamber for test.

THE AMERICAN GYPSUM COMPANY

Material	Thickness ness	Coefficients 128 256 512 1024 2048 4096	Noise Coef.	No.	Base Coat	Application	Surface Treatment	Date
Reverbolite Plaster	5/8"	.10 .32 .35 .40 .51 .35	.40	.40	1st coat 1/4"	Gypsum plaster	2nd coat applied 24 hrs. after 1st coat. 3rd coat applied immediately after 2nd coat.	1934
				2nd coat 1/4"				
				3rd coat 1/8"				

CALIFORNIA STUCCO PRODUCTS CORPORATION

Stuccoustic Plaster, 3/4"	.23	.53	.59	.70	.70	.65	.55	— — —	Gypsum plaster	Prepared by manufacturer at his plant.	1932
Stuccoustic Plaster, 3/4"	—	—	.59	—	—	—	—	— — —	Gypsum plaster	Same sample as above, spray painted	1932
Stuccoustic Plaster, 11/16"	—	.36	.56	—	—	—	—	— — —	Gypsum plaster	3 coats Coustilac at N. E. of S.	1932
formula AB	—	—	.51	—	—	—	—	— — —	Gypsum plaster	Prepared by manufacturer at his plant.	1932
Stuccoustic Plaster, 1/2"	—	—	.51	—	—	—	—	— — —	Gypsum plaster	Prepared by manufacturer at his plant.	1932
formula BB	—	.16	.49	.59	.61	.53	.45	— — —	Gypsum plaster	Same sample as above, spray painted	1932
Stuccoustic plaster, 1/2" .14	.16	.49	.59	.61	.53	.45	— — —	— — —	5 coats cold water paint	at N.B.of S.	
formula BB	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	— — —	—	—	

R. GUASTAVING COMPANY

Akoustolith Plaster 1/4"	.13	.21	.19	.23	.33	.45	.25	1 coat	Gypsum plaster	Applied on binder coat. See mfg. directions.	Floated	1931
Akoustolith Plaster 3/4"	.20	.26	.35	.56	.59	.50	.45	1 coat	Gypsum plaster	Applied on binder coat See mfg. directions.	Floated	1932



R. GUASTAVINO COMPANY (Cont'd.)

Material	Thickness	Coefficients	Noise	No.	Base	Application	Treatment	Date
	ness	128 256 512 1024	2048 4096	Coef.	Coats			
Plastacoustic Plaster	$\frac{1}{2}$ "	.49 .33 .38	.61	.87	.89	.55	Prepared by manufacturer at his plant	1932
Plastacoustic Plaster	$\frac{5}{8}$ "	.19 .62 .87	.68	.71	.75	.70	No base coat. Prepared by manufacturer at his plant	1932

HACHMEISTER - LIND COMPANY

Hachmeister-Lind Acoustic Plaster	1/2"	.16 .19 .25	.36	.44	.49	.30	1st coat 1/4"	Gypsum plaster	2nd coat applied immediately after 1st coat.	Stippled with large pins, holes $\frac{1}{2}$ " deep.	1930
							2nd coat 1/4"				

KALITE COMPANY, LTD.

Kalite H coarse aggregate	1/2"	.32 .33 .47	.66	.67	.67	.55	1st coat 1/4"	No base coat.	2nd coat applied as soon as first coat started to set.	Floated	1934
Kalite H coarse aggregate	1/2"	.34 .30 .48	.66	.62	.61	.50	Same as sample above except brush painted 2 coats non-bridging lacquer at N. B. of S.				
Kalite H coarse aggregate	1/2"	.34 .26 .39	.62	.68	.68	.50	1st coat 1/4"	5/8" gypsum plaster on	2nd coat applied as soon as first coat started to set.	Floated	1934
							2nd coat 1/4"	plaster	board.		



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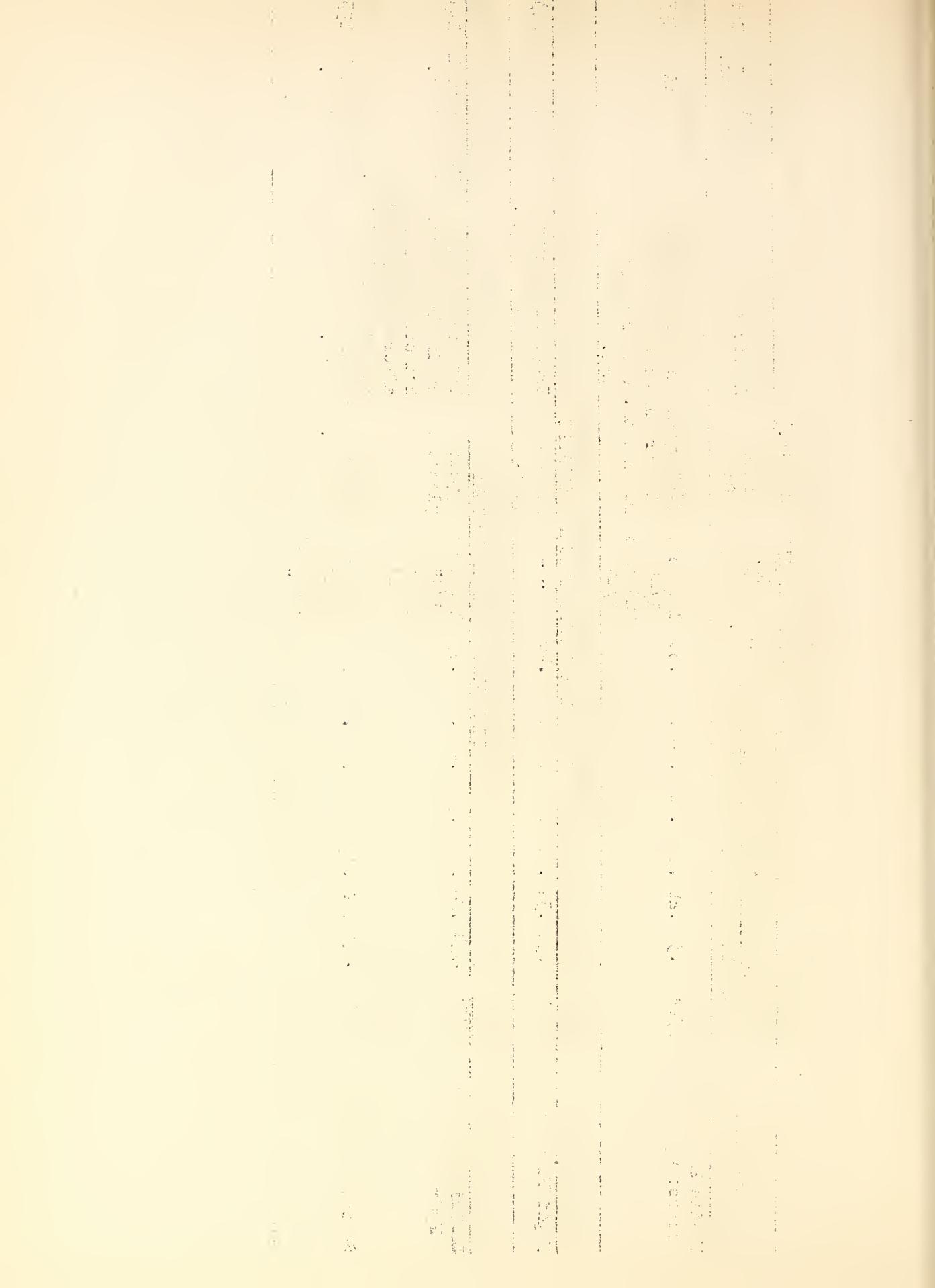
KALITE COMPANY, LTD. (Cont'd.)

Material	Thickness	Coefficients n 128 256 512 1024 2048	n 4096	Noise Coef.	No. of Coats	Base Coat	Application	Surface Treatment	Date
Kalite H coarse aggregate	1/2"	.30 .28 .39 .66 .74	.76 .50	1st coat 1/4"	5/8" gypsum plaster on 2nd coat metal lath.	2nd coat applied as soon as first coat started to set.	Floated	1934	

NEPHI PLASTER & MANUFACTURING COMPANY									
Nephi Plaster	3/4"	.34 .34 .40 .44	.49 .59	.40	- - -	No base coat.	Prepared by manufacturer at his plant.	1932	

UNITED STATES GYPSUM COMPANY

Sabinite Plaster Hydraulic	1/2"	.14 .24 .27 .38	.49 .64	.35	1st coat 1/4"	Gypsum plaster.	1st coat applied on dry base coat. 2nd coat applied after 1st coat had set and partly dried.	Floated with cork float.	1931
Sabinite Plaster	1/2"	.19 .20 .37 .60	.61	.46	.45	1st coat 1/4"	Gypsum plaster.	Applied same as above.	1932



Suggestions Concerning the Proper Use  
of Acoustical Material.

As there has been considerable misconception as to the proper use of acoustical material it is considered desirable to call attention to two of the fundamental principles underlying the formulas which are used in acoustical design. It is assumed in all of the formulas that (1) the absorption is proportional to the area of the absorbing material and that (2) there is a uniform distribution of sound energy. As a rule neither one of these assumptions is true.

It has been found from experiment when very small areas are used, such as the panels in a coffered ceiling having areas from 1 to 4 square feet and separated from each other by a foot or more, that the effective absorption of the material in these panels is greater than when the material is installed in one large area. In fact, for materials having large coefficients, this effective absorption may be as much as 50 per cent more than one would expect from the coefficient.

It has also been found when all of the acoustical material is applied on one surface of a relatively small room, say 50,000 cubic feet or under, that this creates a non-uniform distribution of sound energy in the following manner. Let us assume that the ceiling of a room is covered with a highly absorbent material. Under these conditions the sound energy which is traveling between the floor and ceiling is absorbed quite rapidly, while that traveling between the untreated wall surfaces, having very little to absorb it, may continue for some considerable time. This persistence of sound energy between the untreated surfaces may cause the measured reverberation time to be considerably longer than would be computed using the ordinary reverberation formula and the coefficient usually given. For this reason, it is essential in small rooms that the acoustical material be distributed on the side walls as well as on the ceiling, if the effective absorption of the material is to be anywhere near that which one would expect from the coefficient of the material.

We also wish to call attention to the fact that a proper distribution of the acoustical material should be worked out in the initial plans of a building, as it is frequently impossible to obtain a satisfactory distribution after the interior design has been completed without taking into account the acoustical treatment.





