While the chair is in use, there is a good chance that it will give off gases that are evaporating from the glues, foams, and other material that went into its creation. Those gases . . . will have an immediately negative effect on people who are chemically sensitive . . .

- **Maintenance.** ***Design professionals should not overlook maintenance issues. What is required to maintain the product? Are the maintenance materials safe for the maintenance workers and for the users? Are these materials free of toxic materials? What was the life cycle of the maintenance materials?***

- **Recovery.** ***It is also important that designers understand what happens at the end of the useful life of a given building material or product. Each building component will have a different useful life. Carpeting, for example, will generally need to be replaced far more often than ceiling tile. Ceiling tiles will be replaced more often than restroom counter tops or other major fixed elements. At the moment, the overwhelming majority of building products end up in a landfill when they are no longer useful. Can the product be reused? Is the material recyclable into a material resource for another product? Can the product be easily removed? If it is not reusable or recyclable, is the product biodegradable?***

FIGURE 16-6
Linoleum is an old product now being rediscovered in part because of its substantial environmental benefits throughout its life cycle, from raw material sources through maintenance and recycling.