

## **Status of Federal Action on Chinese Drywall Announced**

Today federal agencies will announce their actions in response to hazards connected to Chinese drywall. We are sending this special email to families affected by this problem so that you can be aware of these developments.

The media and congressional staff are being briefed on both actions underway to reduce the potential hazards and the status of investigations into the impact that some Chinese-made drywall may have on human health and corrosion of electrical and metal components.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is leading a group including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry (ATSDR), and numerous state departments of health on this issue.

### **The Investigations**

Basically, the combined federal task force investigating the issue has found elevated levels of two elements in some Chinese-made drywall: sulfur and strontium. We are conducting additional scientific tests to find the connection between these elevated levels and any reported health symptoms or corrosion effects. The results of these additional tests will be released in November.

The investigation of the drywall itself also found that the Chinese-made drywall emits elevated levels of sulfur compounds. Current testing is looking for the specific chemical compounds and any connection to health and corrosion effects.

When investigators tested homes, some findings surprised them. Researchers were looking for hydrogen sulfide, carbon disulfide and carbonyl sulfide, which have been suspected of being related to the contaminated drywall due to reports of "rotten egg" smells and sulfur-like corrosion of copper and other metals in the homes. These gasses were only found occasionally when outdoor air levels were elevated as well.

The early sample study of homes found levels of two known irritants: acetaldehyde and formaldehyde. But the levels were the same for both homes with Chinese and non-Chinese drywall and were not unusual for new homes. Levels were lower when home air conditioning was in use.

As CPSC Chairman, I want affected families to know that we are currently working diligently to identify a nexus between Chinese drywall and the reported health symptoms and corrosion effects.

### **Federal action**

While testing closes in on the causes of the problems, federal and state agencies are taking actions to the extent of their authority.

CPSC actions include the following:

1. To date, we have received nearly 1900 complaints from residents in 30 states about health and corrosion symptoms.
2. We have conducted more than 700 telephone interviews with affected homeowners and we will be releasing dozens of in-depth investigation reports to the media and public today.
3. We have launched a Drywall Information Center Web site to provide ongoing information to the public about this issue. To access the site go to [www.DrywallResponse.gov](http://www.DrywallResponse.gov).
4. We are working closely with the Department of Homeland Security to identify and stop imports. We have identified hundreds of thousands of stockpiled boards and we have sent notice to the warehouses where they are stored.
5. We want any homeowner who believes their health symptom and/or corrosion of electrical and metal components is tied to drywall, to report to CPSC's Hotline immediately. They can reach us at 1-800-638-2772.
6. Like all task force members, we are talking to Congressional and White House officials about possible legislation and other means of helping families affected by and struggling with this issue.

Some of you may be aware that I just returned from a week-long Product Safety Summit in China. At that Summit, I called upon Chinese manufacturers to do what is "just and fair" and meet their responsibilities to the consumers of their product, if we prove certain drywall is defective.

We understand that this problem has, literally, driven people from their homes. To those families we would like to say that we are driving as hard as we can to find out what is causing these health symptoms and corrosion problems.

All of the federal and state partners will continue to work on behalf of the families affected by this Chinese drywall issue. We are committed to providing answers to homeowners. As new information becomes available, we will share it as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,

Inez Tenenbaum  
*Chairman*  
*U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission*

**TIPS:** Federal and state health experts suggest these steps to improve indoor air quality and to reduce exposure to substances that can cause health concerns:

- o Open windows as much as possible to let in fresh air.
- o Keep the temperature inside homes at the lowest comfortable setting.

- o Run the air conditioner or dehumidifier.
- o Also, spend as much time outdoors in fresh air as possible.
- o Do not smoke, and especially do not smoke indoors. Cigarette smoke contains, among other contaminants, formaldehyde.

1. For more information: [www.DrywallResponse.gov](http://www.DrywallResponse.gov).

You are currently subscribed to the email list "drywall" as: olivia@prioritymarketing.com

The Drywall Information Center (<http://www.cpsc.gov/info/drywall/index.html>) provides information on CPSC's investigation of problem drywall. CPSC has received over 1,000 reports from residents in more than 20 states and the District of Columbia who believe their health symptoms or the corrosion of certain metal components in their homes are related to the presence of drywall produced in China.

To report suspected problem drywall, visit <https://www.cpsc.gov/cgibin/incident.aspx>

To unsubscribe, please do one of the following:

(1) go to <http://www.cpsc.gov/info/drywall/signup.aspx> and use the on-line form

(2) send a blank email to leave-1140151-

559470.35a529c08f81e5a5187caa6dcc9ee913@list.cpsc.gov

Thank you.

This message is from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, an independent federal regulatory agency, located at 4330 East West Highway, Bethesda, MD 20814 Toll-free hotline: (800) 638-2772