

INVESTIGATION OF IMPORTED DRYWALL STATUS UPDATE, JANUARY 2010

I. Overview

This update describes new developments in the ongoing investigation of imported drywall and supplements the previous reports provided to the Committee. As of January 25, 2010, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (“Commission” or “CPSC”) had received 2833 incident reports related to drywall from 37 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. More than 90% of reports are from Florida (59%), Louisiana (21%), Mississippi (6%) and Alabama (5%) and Virginia (4%).

In addition to the consumer reports on drywall received by the CPSC, our outreach efforts and investigations have secured information from many other sources, including state governors, importers, builders, distributors, installers, and other parties in the drywall distribution chain. Combining the information from all sources and eliminating duplicates, our best estimate of the number of homes that have registered complaints about drywall is approximately 5000.

Highlights this month include:

- CPSC staff is working closely with Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (“LBL”) to analyze draft emissions testing data that will likely confirm our hypothesis that there are elevated emission rates for hydrogen sulfide from some Chinese drywall compared to non-Chinese drywall given the type of corrosion that we have seen in the homes we have visited. The analysis of the LBL work is proceeding on an aggressive schedule and will be released as soon as the science is complete.
- CPSC staff along with staff of our partner agencies participated in a town hall meeting on drywall hosted by Senator LeMieux in Florida on January 30, 2010.
- CPSC issued a joint release with HUD on interim guidance on the identification of homes with corrosive problem drywall on January 28, 2010.

II. Federal, State and International Coordination

CPSC and its partner agencies have continued to meet, especially to develop guidance for identification and remediation of the problem drywall. CPSC has been working with HUD to assist that agency in developing guidance for the use of local Community Development Block Grant program funds for the identification and remediation of problem drywall in homes. We continue to have frequent coordination meetings with our agency partners and are working with the Council on Environmental Quality and the Domestic Policy

Council. The CPSC is also continuing its dialogue with Chinese government officials. Additionally, CPSC staff spoke at a drywall meeting at Indian River State College in Fort Pierce, Florida.

III. Progress in the Investigation

CPSC continues to investigate the chain of commerce of drywall, and continues to question firms in the U.S. and abroad about their drywall activities. CPSC also continues to investigate all reports of fire incidents related to drywall, but none have been confirmed to be related.

Analyses continue as planned and discussed in earlier reports. CPSC is committed to the release of all findings as quickly as possible, while maintaining scientific integrity. Contract work on analysis of samples is proceeding with Environmental Health and Engineering, Sandia National Laboratory, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology.