

## **INVESTIGATION OF IMPORTED DRYWALL** *STATUS UPDATE, May 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 May 25, 2010, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (“Commission” or “CPSC”) had received 3,343 incident reports related to drywall from 37 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and American Samoa. More than 90% of reports are from five states – Florida (58%), Louisiana (20%), Mississippi (6%), Alabama (5%) and Virginia (4%).

### **II. New Developments**

- At the U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue (S&ED) meetings in Beijing on May 24-25, U.S. officials pressed the Chinese government to facilitate a meeting between CPSC and the Chinese drywall companies whose products were used in U.S. homes, and exhibited high levels of reactive sulfur gases during CPSC testing. The S&ED represents the highest-level bilateral forum to discuss a broad range of issues between the two nations. Concerning this meeting, Chairman Tenenbaum stated, “I appeal to these Chinese drywall companies to carefully examine their responsibilities to U.S. families who have been harmed and do what is fair and just.”
- On May 25, 2010, CPSC publicly released the manufacturers’ names for the various samples tested for reactive sulfur gas emissions by Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. The decoded results are provided at [www.drywallresponse.gov](http://www.drywallresponse.gov).
- CPSC contractor Environmental Health and Engineering, Inc. (EH&E) provided CPSC with preliminary information on a study which we expect to be publicly released in the coming weeks. EH&E found a strong correlation between elemental sulfur content in samples of unpainted drywall and hydrogen sulfide emissions for those same samples in the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory chamber emissions testing which was reported on April 2, 2010. Additionally, EH&E found that x-ray fluorescence (XRF) measurements of strontium in drywall were in excellent agreement with inductively coupled plasma (ICP) spectroscopy results. This work suggests that XRF screening for strontium followed by elemental sulfur testing could be an effective tool to identify drywall with elevated hydrogen sulfide emissions at import or manufacture.
- A Digital Video Conference was held with the Chinese consumer product safety regulator, AQSIQ, on May 4, 2010. Technical details of recently released studies were discussed.

### **III. Progress in the Investigation**

We continue to investigate long term corrosion, refine screening techniques and other details for identification methodologies, and monitor the indoor air environment in a limited number of homes, including certain ones that have been remediated. This work may allow us to fine tune the Interim Identification Guidance and Interim Remediation Guidance at some point in the future, but the bulk of our scientific investigation is complete. This has been the largest Compliance investigation in agency history. To date, CPSC has spent over \$5 million to investigate the chemical nature and the chain of commerce of problem drywall, and issue the associated identification and remediation guidance to assist impacted homeowners.