



CHARLIE CRIST
GOVERNOR

April 3, 2009

The Honorable Lisa Jackson
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
Ariel Rios Building
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

The Honorable Richard E. Besser, M.D.
Acting Director
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road
Atlanta, GA 30333

Dear Administrator Jackson and Director Besser:

On behalf of the State of Florida, I am requesting assistance from the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to develop and implement chemical testing strategies in homes that are experiencing severe copper corrosion associated with Chinese made drywall. The resources housed in the Environmental Response Teams (ERT) and Industrial Hygienists from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) capable of evaluating the health hazards possibly associated with corrosive gasses emitted from Chinese made drywall will enable a timely assessment of exposure and public health implications. Media reports on the amount of drywall imported from China during the recent housing boom suggest that many Florida homes may be affected.

In late January 2009, the Florida Department of Health (DOH) State Toxicologist and Indoor Air Programs Coordinator performed a preliminary assessment of 12 homes throughout south Florida, where bulk samples of drywall were collected for laboratory analysis. Laboratory analysis of these materials confirmed many of the findings reported by private consultants, including the presence of strontium sulfide and elemental sulfur in drywall from China. Tests also confirmed that drywall from problem homes generated hydrogen sulfide, carbonyl sulfide, and carbon disulfide when exposed to high relative humidity or heat. All of these compounds are capable of causing the type of corrosion identified in the complaint homes, and at sufficient concentrations could pose a health hazard.

These initial findings suggest that indoor air samples to determine occupant exposure to the corrosive gasses should be performed. Health related complaints from occupants living in these homes are sporadic and DOH is attempting to gather more health related information. The health hazards posed by exposure to chemicals in these homes are currently unclear, but we believe that a thorough and robust exposure assessment will enable DOH to determine if a health advisory is warranted.

The Honorable Lisa Jackson
The Honorable Richard E. Besser, M.D
Page Two
April 3, 2009

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has recently initiated an investigation focused on the suspected drywall and secondary damage it may be causing to electrical wiring, safety equipment, and natural gas connections. However, the resources and testing expertise necessary to evaluate occupant exposure in problem homes is not available from the CPSC.

Until mid March 2009, the problems associated with Chinese drywall had only been documented in Florida to any appreciable degree. Recent reports from Louisiana, Virginia, and North Carolina have demonstrated this is a multi-state issue directly connected with the importation of a foreign-made product.

Any assistance you may be able to provide in accessing Federal resources to assess human health exposures in these homes will benefit the Floridians adversely impacted by this extraordinary event.

Our point of contact for testing related to this project is our State Toxicologist:

David Krause, Ph.D., MSPH, CIH
Bureau of Environmental Public Health Medicine
Division of Environmental Health
Florida Department of Health
4052 Bald Cypress Way Bin A08
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1712
Tel: (850) 245-4115
Fax: (850) 922-8473
Cell: (850) 491-8397

We look forward to working with you and your staff in the coming days.

Sincerely,



Charlie Crist

cc: Surgeon General Ana M. Viamonte Ros
Florida Congressional Delegation