

## Made in China

### Problem Drywall

Problem Drywall, otherwise known by the more nefarious names Chinese Drywall or Defective Drywall, emits high levels of hydrogen sulfide or other gases from decay of materials in the drywall.

The Drywall Safety Act of 2012, enacted by Congress in January 2013, establishes guidelines developed by independent and state analyses, as well as Consumer Product Safety Commission data.



### Good Regulations, Good Drywall

Drywall is composed of an interior layer of gypsum-based plaster (calcium sulphate) pressed between two thick sheets of paper, and then dried in a kiln.

When manufactured in the U.S., drywall is subject to purification regulations for the gypsum materials to ensure that sulfur content and organic materials, such as sulfur bacteria, are at minimal levels. The purification process is important because it reduces the likelihood of corrosive off-gassing that can lead to potential health problems for a building's occupants and, as we know now, damaging corrosion of metal components such as wiring, piping, fixtures, etc.

### How Problem Drywall Reached Our Shores

Drywall demand outpaced supply during the construction boom between 2001 and 2007...and demand accelerated due to repairs related to hurricanes that damaged Florida and the Gulf Coast. To accommodate increased demand, suppliers imported drywall from China. Regrettably, Chinese drywall did not include properly purified gypsum, and included organic material, higher levels of sulfur content and most unfortunately, sulphur bacteria.

### Problem Drywall: Very Bad Mojo

Problem drywall impurities begin to manifest when temperature and humidity are within certain ranges and produce off-gassing of materials, such as hydrogen sulfide and other unstable sulfides.

Hydrogen sulfide is a corrosive gas that reacts with copper to degrade the material.



When temperature and humidity combine to generate the gaseous byproducts from the reaction with the sulfur, decayed organic materials and the sulfur bacteria cause rotten egg smells, corrode copper and other metals, and trigger health issues.

### Homes Built or Renovated 2001-2009: Careful!

Homes built or renovated beginning in 2001 through 2009 potentially have imported problem drywall. It is important to review homeowner disclosure documentation and appraisal information to determine the date of construction or if renovations were performed during this time period.

### US Inspect's Problem Drywall Solution

Our Problem Drywall Inspection seeks to determine the possible presence of:

- Blackening of copper electrical wiring and/or air conditioning evaporator coils (or documentation of replacement of evaporator coils due to blackened corrosion causing failure)
- Visible manufacturer stamps or other marks that may indicate the presence of suspect drywall, and the installation of new drywall (for new construction or renovations) between 2001 and 2009.

We report the presence of any visible evidence as outlined above. However, we will not recommend further scientific testing due to the expense and sometimes inconclusive nature of those test results.

### What Actions Should You Take?

- Review Homeowner Disclosure Agreements to determine if the home was built or renovated between 2001 and 2009
- Review Homeowner Disclosure Agreements for any specific mention of problem drywall disclosed by the homeowner
- Review your internal and corporate policies to determine next steps

We continue to monitor this issue and report back as investigations, testing, legal actions and official determinations evolve.

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### About Us Inspect

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US Inspect is the nation's leading inspection services firm, delivering residential and corporate relocation inspections since 1987. Our reputation is built on decades of honesty, integrity and excellent service to our customers at one of the most important decisions in their lives – buying or selling a home. We are committed to ensuring that each of our customers enjoys an exceptional inspection experience.

Please contact [marketing@usinspect.com](mailto:marketing@usinspect.com) if you have any questions or require assistance.