

Chairman Inez Tenenbaum
U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
4330 East West Highway
Bethesda, MD 20814

Dear Chairman Tenenbaum:

I want to congratulate you on your recent confirmation as Chairman of the Commission. I look forward to your leadership and vision for the Commission and specifically your attention to the issue of Chinese Drywall, which is of immediate concern to Floridians. Specifically I am asking your help in directing Commission staff to provide a meaningful reply to a letter I sent to your predecessor on April 29, 2009. The response I received on May 21, 2009, and communications between CPSC staff and Florida Department of Health staff have been insufficient.

In the April 29th letter I requested the development of a parallel and coordinated State and Federal effort to respond to the phenomenon of severe copper corrosion and other metals in homes associated with the presence of Chinese manufactured drywall. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Environmental Protection Agency have been actively engaged with Florida's Operation Drywall Incident Management Team (IMT) and are actively fulfilling the specific requests made of them in that letter. The Florida Department of Health, our lead agency in the state on this issue, has experienced little to no collaboration from CPSC staff. Repeated invitations to participate with Operation Drywall IMT have gone unanswered.

It has been brought to my attention that CPSC staff has been performing investigations of Florida homes and taken samples for analysis. This practice of carrying out uncoordinated, parallel inspections in Florida continues even after repeated discussions between Florida DOH and CPSC staff. Most of these inspections in Florida have been conducted without the coordination or knowledge of any state agencies. During a recent sampling visit to a Florida home by CPSC staff, which was facilitated by a County Health Department, CPSC staff provided a two hour notice that the inspecting team would include a delegation of observers from China. While your staff's efforts are welcomed, the lack of coordination, consultation, and communication is concerning. Experience has shown that discordant efforts such as this can lead to confusion among all parties duplicative efforts. To address this issue and, ensure we move forward in a coherent, coordinated manner, I am requesting that you:

1. assign a CPSC staff member to liaise with Florida's Operation Drywall IMT and participate in weekly conference calls.
2. direct CPSC Health Sciences continue to participate with the interagency technical working group and weekly CDC hosted state and federal health agency conference call.
3. direct CPSC Engineering Sciences share its research plans and findings regarding drywall associated copper corrosion on the safety of household electrical and gas systems and to collaborate with the Florida Fire Marshall on their research.
4. direct CPSC management to provide the Operation Drywall IMT with details of its project timelines, laboratory and field research, sampling efforts and study designs.

5. commit to participate in the data sharing agreement currently under review by the State of Florida Department of Health, the State of Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
6. direct CPSC management to coordinate their research efforts with those of the Florida Department of Health in order to minimize duplicate efforts, ensure the best possible research design and make the best use of our limited resources.
7. direct CPSC staff to notify and coordinate Operation Drywall IMT of all past, current, and future activities and inspections within the State of Florida.

To ensure the most efficient communication between CPSC and Florida Department of Health, please provide the name, title and contact information for your agency drywall liaison to Florida's Operation Drywall Incident Management Team. Please direct all correspondence through the Florida Operation Drywall Incident Management Team, specifically Dr. David Krause, State Toxicologist (David.Krause@doh.state.fl.us) and Nancy Leiva, Unified Command, Situation Status Unit Leader (Nancy.Leiva@doh.state.fl.us) or 850-245-4250.

I appreciate your personal attention to this matter. We need to move forward and provide accurate, science based information to Floridian's about the potential health and safety hazards that Chinese drywall may pose.

Sincerely,

Charlie Crist

CC: Commissioner Nancy Nord
Commissioner Thomas Hill Moore