

Executive Summary of Identification Guidance and Remediation Guidance for Homes with Corrosion from Problem Drywall as of March 18, 2011¹

**by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**

Staffs of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) released identification guidance² and remediation guidance³ on March 18, 2011. The staff of each agency believes that following the protocols set forth in these documents will enable homeowners to correctly identify homes containing problem drywall and to comprehensively remediate those homes to address any potential health and safety issues associated with the problem drywall. These protocols are based upon the information now available and may change in the future as we learn more from ongoing studies. However, given the protective nature of the current guidance, any future changes will likely contain fewer, not additional, recommendations.

The identification guidance and remediation guidance are not intended to address any non-health and non-safety remediation requirements and do not address economic considerations or practical considerations concerning how to implement the completion of the remediation protocols. The Drywall Task Force⁴ recognizes that such additional considerations are of great importance to the parties involved, but the Task Force believes that at this time, it lacks the statutory authority and the factual and scientific basis to opine on these matters.

This information is grounded in the earlier guidance published by the staffs of CPSC and HUD and reflects the results of additional research.

Identification Guidance

The identification guidance is based primarily on the presence of metal corrosion in homes, as well as other documented indicators of problem drywall. Practically, the identification process requires two steps: (1) an initial or threshold inspection to find visual signs of metal corrosion and evidence of drywall installation during the relevant time period, and (2) the identification of multiple corroborating factors or characteristics.

Remediation Guidance

The remediation guidance focuses primarily on the replacement of problem drywall and building components for which drywall-induced corrosion might cause a health or safety problem. The Task Force has based its recommendations on the results of its ongoing science-based approach to this issue. Notably, the Task Force is no longer recommending necessarily the removal of all electrical wiring in the home, a change that may reduce the cost of remediation for many homes. This decision is based upon the results of recent scientific studies on the effects of corrosive environments on electrical wires, which found no acute hazardous conditions or performance issues with the wiring in conditions simulating decades of exposure to problem drywall.

With these changes, the remediation guidance for homes with problem drywall calls for the replacement of all (1) possible problem drywall; (2) fire safety alarm devices (including smoke alarms and carbon

¹ This is a staff document, and has not been reviewed or approved by, and may not necessarily reflect the views of, the Commission or the Department.

² www.cpsc.gov/info/drywall/IDguidance031811.pdf, March 18, 2011.

³ www.cpsc.gov/info/drywall/Remediation031811.pdf, March 18, 2011.

⁴ The primary members of the “Drywall Task Force” have been the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

monoxide alarms); (3) electrical distribution components (including receptacles, switches, and circuit breakers, but not necessarily electrical wiring); and (4) gas service piping and fire suppression sprinkler systems.

These versions supersede prior versions of the identification guidance and remediation guidance for problem drywall.