

## Howard Ehram

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**From:** Express Email Marketing [mailer\_response@emailcounts.com] on behalf of Chinese Drywall Screening LLC [Howard@chinesedrywallscreening.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 11, 2010 7:29 PM  
**To:** Howard@chinesedrywallscreening.com  
**Subject:** Chinese Drywall Newsletter - Multiple updates

## Chinese Drywall - General Newsletter

### Note from the sender:

Greetings,

Much has happened in 3 months since my last newsletter. I tried to make it easy to scan over the topics to see what may be new or applicable to you. I also want to remind everyone that 2 good sources for current cdw news and info are the Twitter box on the bottom of my [home page](#) and [www.chinesedrywall.com](http://www.chinesedrywall.com). I also recommend setting up Google Alerts with specific search criteria that meet your preferences.

I have several case studies I have been working on but they have not been completed nor do I have the credentials of a professional lab. With that said, here is a brief list of some of the things we have been seeing:

- CDW in commercial properties such as offices, warehouses and restaurants.
- Multiple types of low strontium, reactive drywall that is domestic. (XRF uses high levels of strontium to detect tainted drywall.)
- High strontium domestic and Chinese drywall that is not reactive.
- Domestic drywall that is partially reactive and non-reactive in the same 12' sheet (this was a surprise to see).
- Homes that showed affects similar to cdw but it turned out to be from a different source other than the drywall.
- Very poor remediation jobs where contactors are leaving cdw in behind crown molding

### News and Information:

#### **Selling or foreclosing on a cdw property? Don't lose your evidence and/or give**

Many homeowners think that their report to enter litigation is enough to document the steps are to properly preserve evidence if they were to lose possession of their property documentation and collection of the physical evidence that proves your property has evidence could jeopardize your claim. There has been a Court Order regarding preservation of evidence [trial Order 1B](#) that specifies the requirements to properly preserve evidence of an affidavit samples of drywall and electrical devices per type of drywall as well as obtaining the specifies that all drywall is to be photographed as it is removed. Since this is not feasible [trial Order 13A](#) provides the guidelines for documenting the types and locations of drywall your attorney know if you are in foreclosure or plan to sell your property. And just because it doesn't necessarily mean you are giving up your claim. Therefore, if you are losing your property, be sure to consult your attorney about preservation of evidence and retaining your claim.

#### **Mortgage assistance information from Clint Odom from US Senator Nelson's office**

Clint Odom sent some information on June 17th and it included a letter with Fannie Mae (the letter is below). Clint said to make sure that homeowners looking for mortgage assistance program when they call, otherwise they might not get help that has been promised to "hardship" program that was to be extended to drywall victims, while Freddie would try to get the program under Chapter 67 of its guidelines. The Fannie program is effective mid July and starts immediately. You can contact Freddie/Fannie directly if your bank/servicer if they are not helpful. [http://www.chinesedrywall.com/files/Fannie\\_Mae.pdf](http://www.chinesedrywall.com/files/Fannie_Mae.pdf)  
Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac own or guarantee most of the actual notes and the bank on your loan, click this link for more information and scroll to the bottom for links to look at the bill. <http://billnelson.senate.gov/news/details.cfm?id=325778>

#### **Property tax bulletin: building values to be assessed at \$0:**

The Sun City Homeowners hub got an email from Callie Nestund with Representative 8965. This is the one that allows County tax appraisers to drop assessment value to zero or waive their portion of what the county collects. There was some confusion because they do so on single family residential homes but it was up to the counties to decide whether to do so. Nestund said in her email that "DOR has been in contact with numerous property appraisers and will apply the assessment to condos and duplexes as well."

<https://taxlaw.state.fl.us/wordfiles/PTO%20BUL%2010-09.pdf>

While on the topic of property tax, I want to pay tribute to Jeff Furst, St Lucie County appraiser who died suddenly and unexpectedly of a stroke July 2nd. He was a wise and courageous one of the first and most aggressive property appraisers in helping homeowners with condo associations Town Hall meeting on cdw a year ago, he got a standing ovation at the meeting. [story.](#)

#### **Banner and Knauf court cases, CDW Litigation:**

First jury trial results in \$2.4M judgment on \$1.6M home:

<http://www.miamiherald.com/2010/06/18/1689094/chinese-drywall-verdict-is-in.html>  
<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704122904575315303116183036.html>

and/or base tile.

I define reactive drywall as having the ability to react with and corrode copper. I want to mention that although strontium levels are not true indicators for reactive drywall, an XRF gun to locate high strontium levels is a great tool to help diagnose and locate reactive drywall if it is done properly and the limitations are understood. There are several companies that have a very good handle on this and maximize the value that it provides.

Below are some items regarding communication hubs and collaboration on the cdw issues:

#### **Communication hub for cdw victims:**

Dee Giordano is a homeowner in Sun City Center that has been very active in dealing with Chinese drywall. She helped create CDCG which stands for Contaminated Drywall Coordination Group. It is a group of homeowners who are trying to help themselves in whatever way they can. They pledge not send out any type of advertisement for services. They check with the government about insurance, mortgages, etc and answer any questions anyone may have. If you are a victim of Chinese drywall, you may want to send her an email to link up with her group. The more coordinated the effort is, the more response we will get from government and politicians. Dee's email is ali@deegiordano.com.

#### **Reporting on CDW from Dee Giordano, Srinivas Rao and Karen Scott**

Aaron Kessler from Sarasota Herald-Tribune has been writing extensively on Chinese drywall for over a year now and was recently nominated for a prestigious journalism award based on his "beat" coverage of the issue over in Sarasota. He has teamed up with ProPublica which is a web based journalistic advocacy group working on getting information and stories out beyond the boundaries of traditional newspapers. ProPublica, the Sarasota Herald-Tribune, and CBS News have teamed up to investigate Chinese drywall. They are asking homeowners to share the details of their situation with them by filling out a simple form available at: <http://www.propublica.org/article/do->

#### **Knauf immediately settles 2 cases set to go to trial in New Orleans Federal Court full gut on partial homes:**

<http://www.heraldtribune.com/article/20100628/COLUMNIST/6281014/2107/BUSINESS?p=1>

#### **Great Q&A on cdw litigation with Gary Mason (obtained from [www.chinesedrywall.com](http://www.chinesedrywall.com))**

<http://www.lawyersandsettlements.com/articles/14380/interview-chinese-drywall-china.html>

Below is a good collection of news and articles I obtained from one or more of Karen

#### **Bacteria the cause of Chinese drywall? Biological causation or Chemical? B**

One of the theories floating round for quite a while is that the cause of the off gassing in drywall. These types of bacteria occur in nature and when harnessed can actually be used. However, there seemed to be no support for this theory by the Florida DOH or the CDC. Highly credentialed professionals still debate whether the causation is chemical or biological behind the causation.

RealTime labs has issued a press release announcing that they have identified species and not in normal domestic drywall that produce hydrogen sulfide and reduced sulfur in homes with Chinese drywall. DNA analysis of these cultures using Polymerase Chain Reaction identified the bacteria as *Sulfobacillus thermosulfidooxidans*. They also identified an additional species. Previous published studies, in which RealTime scientists participated, had identified *ferrooxidans*. Apparently these bacteria are known to produce sulfur in the form of Sulfur. explanation for the presence of sulfur in Chinese drywall. <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/chinese-drywall-conclusively-identified-96376339.html>

**The Antilles community in Vero** is doing some significant work with Sabre Technics and Bob Webster has been a tireless correspondent with many of us on their efforts to find out what additional researchers say about RealTime Labs announcement.

#### **The Louisiana Legislature has passed a bill banning cancelation based on Chinese**

<http://www.property-casualty.com/News/2010/6/Pages/La-Legislature-Passes-Bill-Banning-Chinese-Drywall-Cancellation.aspx>

#### **Senator Jim Webb (D-VA) Introduces Amendment to Help Chinese Drywall Victims**

Senator Jim Webb has introduced an amendment to the Senate Tax Extenders bill (S. 3091) to provide Service (IRS) issue guidance on the applicability of Chinese drywall victims filing for bankruptcy on their possessions. Senator Webb's provision requires IRS action by the extension deadline for filing a 2010

#### **Interesting article with more details on alleged cover-up agreement**

[http://www.law.com/jsp/article.jsp?id=1202462529455&Opposing Counsel in Chinese Drywall Litigation](http://www.law.com/jsp/article.jsp?id=1202462529455&Opposing+Counsel+in+Chinese+Drywall+Litigation)

#### **Story about the family involved in the Miami Dade case**

<http://www.miamiherald.com/2010/06/16/1682641/couple-details-drywall-ordeal.html>

#### **ProPublica article on the alleged cover-up between Banner Supply and Knauf**

<http://www.propublica.org/feature/documents-unsealed-in-chinese-drywall-lawsuit1>

#### **Taishan finally shows up to contest MDL court ruling in Virginia homes lawsuit**

<http://hamptonroads.com/2010/06/chinese-drywall-maker-appeals-federal-judges-ruling?cid=1>

[you-have-defective-drywall](#) They want information directly from homeowners so they can measure the severity of the crisis and fact-check the claims made by regulators and builders. As with anything, be careful what information you share and make sure you are comfortable with whom it is shared with and recommend checking with your attorney. Some past coverage can be viewed at:

<http://www.propublica.org/topic/tainted-drywall/>

### **Homeowners Video in the works (info from Karen Scott)**

Colleen Stephens from our Virginia hub is putting together a video showing the faces of people who have been impacted by Chinese drywall in their homes. She has asked for video clips and photos of individuals and families affected by Chinese drywall. If you want to help, you can email her at [capns@yahoo.com](mailto:capns@yahoo.com)

### **News and info**

I have compiled the most important news stories from this past month to the right. I recommend skimming then to see if any are helpful to you.

As always, I try my best to provide the most unbiased and helpful information as possible. It's always a challenge to share the best information without promoting any private agenda's, including my own. Any information I am providing is for convenience and awareness and I don't attest to the validity or accuracy. However, I will stick my neck out a little by saying I obviously filter out anything that either doesn't make sense to my understanding of the issues or does not have some basic credibility or decent track record.

I hope this helps those struggling with cdw issues. I'm still struggling with my condos personally and as head of the Association. I plan to write an article titled "The Trials and Tribulations of an Association Dealing with Chinese Drywall" It's a story that needs to be heard and it will be enlightening to many.

Feel free to contact me if there is anything I can help you with or to collaborate on some specific issues. As Shawn Macomber phrased it, I enjoy "geeking out" with others on Chinese drywall!

Sincerely,

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