

# Gainesville's Spiderman Tackles Toxic Chinese Drywall

By Jacklyne Ramos



**Spiderman Mulholland inspects air conditioning system coils in a Boynton Beach home for signs of toxic Chinese drywall. One sign would be blackened coils.**

during the last two years. Crystal and Gerard Kinler, along with their four children, have been persistently ill since they moved into the home which Mulholland confirmed had Chinese drywall.

"If the metal fixtures in the house are turning black, what could be said about our lungs," said Crystal Kinler. "My youngest daughter has been on and off a respirator for years, while my oldest son has ranked up an overwhelming number of school absences for constantly coming down with terrible nose bleeds."

Individuals exposed to the toxic chemicals for prolonged periods of time also frequently experience headaches, coughs, upper respiratory or sinus issues, eye irritation, fatigue, difficulty breathing, body aches and rashes.

New technology for stabilization has been tested in a Florida home. Laboratory and on-site testing showed a major reduction in out gassing of sulfur compounds by an estimated 95 percent.

"This would be a tremendous breakthrough for us if we could scientifically prove stabilization of the gases in these homes until remediation measures could be conducted," Mulholland said. "Our main concern is to get people help."

Despite the scientific breakthroughs, Mulholland warns that there is no easy solution to this problem and the source (drywall) will have to be removed from the homes. There is no quick fix or magic formula, just removal of the source.

Mulholland is a former United States Marine Sniper and rappel specialist who conducted special ops training. Shortly after leaving the military in 1983, he started his own business doing window cleaning, water-proofing, restoration, and forensic investigations on high-rise buildings that some considered suicidal.

His unusual and versatile means of scaling impossible structures with ropes, suction

**A**lthough cases of toxic Chinese drywall have not yet been reported in North Central Florida, the forensic experts who are currently investigating the situation throughout the southeast are headquartered in Gainesville.

Spiderman Mulholland, the leading investigator at US Building Consultants, Inc. (USBCI), and principal of US Building Laboratories is working with industry-wide professionals to develop protocol for inspection, stabilization, and remediation to help families caught in the crisis.

"Our main goal is to find a solution," Mulholland said. We need to help families who have been forced to stay in their homes and continue to suffer the effects of possible toxic out-gassing," Mulholland said.

USBCI inspects homes throughout the southeast to analyze the toxic Chinese drywall crisis. Through extensive research, Mulholland and his forensic team discovered that prolonged exposure to the 11 sulfur compounds found in the imported drywall has a negative impact on people's health. "We see the same situations day in and day out," Mulholland said, "families complain-

ing of the same symptoms and the same persistent rotten-egg or sulfur odors inside the homes."

It is speculated that Chinese drywall was shipped to the U.S. from China during the housing boom in the early- to mid-1990s. Additionally, it was used in great numbers in Florida following Hurricanes Wilma and Katrina. It is estimated that it was installed in well over 100,000 homes between 2004 and 2006.

Chinese drywall contains potentially toxic materials that release gases, which are believed responsible for damaging homes and causing the health problems. The highly toxic compounds being found are hydrogen sulfide, sulfuric acid, sulfur dioxide and carbon disulfide.

"While toxicologists are in a legal battle to prove or disprove the human health risk, the physical evidence in the field is overwhelming and should not be ignored," Mulholland said.

USBCI has been closely monitoring the homes and health of many people, including the Kinler family in Boynton Beach. The family has seen a serious decline in health




**(above)** Samples from the home's examination are marked and bagged and taken to the US Building Laboratories office in Gainesville.

**(right)** Using high-tech forensic equipment, inspectors can determine if there are problems with the drywall without having to knock down a wall.

cups, PR-3 pulley rappel systems, specialized wall braces and several of his own designed wall-walking systems inspired the media to nickname him "Spiderman." He later legally changed his first name to Spiderman.

With more than 20 years experience in diagnosing problems and developing solutions for building envelope construction in residential, commercial and high rise buildings, Mulholland has been and continues to work around the clock to develop the solution to the biggest environmental disaster in U.S. housing industry.

*For more information on Chinese dry-wall and Spiderman Mulholland, go to his web site at [www.usbcinc.com](http://www.usbcinc.com).* 



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