

Scams on Chinese and/or Other Defective Drywall

Gainesville, Fla. - - A leading forensic expert on building envelope, water intrusion, toxic mold, and Chinese drywall, Spiderman S. Mulholland, Senior Forensic Investigator and national consultant with U S Building Consultants and [U S Building Laboratories Inc.](#), realizes that unsuspecting homeowners and building owners are dealing with some unscrupulous contractors and inspectors who are promising solutions to the Chinese and/or other defective drywall and not delivery what they promise.

In our opinion, some of these practices could be considered scams:

1.) Carbon filters being placed inside the HVAC system that claims to trap all the Chinese and/or other defective drywall toxic chemicals. Based on our forensic analysis, this is fraudulent and could not scientifically be capable of removing any significant out-gassing. Additionally, these filters and others like HEPA may throw the home's mechanical system out-of-balance and actually exacerbate the situation.

2.) Another case is where an inspector and a remediation company have joined forces and are essentially both inspecting and remediating the homes. Inspectors need to be third-party, (no exchange of monies or favors between inspector and remediator) and acting in the homeowner's best interest. Anyone who is both inspecting and remediating has put themselves in a serious conflict of interest where fraud could be easily conducted by these individuals. Beware of ties between contractors and inspectors. This is normally considered a serious conflict of interest in our industry and essentially takes out third party accountability. Most associations and reputable inspectors and remediation contractors always avoid this practice.

In our opinion, no owner should have one company both inspect and remediate. Remediation companies need to disclose any possible conflicts of interest to owners and insure a clear distinction between inspecting and remediating the property. If you know of a company that wants to give free inspection to remediate or both inspect and remediate your property, you may want to contact the State Attorney General's office at 1-866-966-7226.

3. The State of Florida has said just about anyone can inspect for Chinese and/or other defective drywall; however, in our opinion this will prove to be harmful to owners from both a diagnostic and legal standpoint. Visual inspection has been proven to be very misleading; the dynamics of this crisis require a much more comprehensive inspection including source sampling and analysis. If your inspector does not qualify as an expert in your particular state, did not complete a proper chain of custody, your inspection report has little or no validity. Also, homeowners cannot do their own inspections; this is a conflict of interest and would never stand up in court which is where this crisis unfortunately is heading.

4. A few homeowners trying to sell their properties may be trying to clean or paint the copper, caulking up electrical outlets to reduce out-gassing, not disclosing damaged to A/C coils or other electrical appliances in an

attempt to defraud prospective home buyers and renters. We have a case history in which a builder attempted this and received several additional reports concerning these terrible deceptive practices – Buyer/Renters beware.

5. Beware of remediation companies moving you out and telling you that all your personal belongings are contaminated and must be remediated. If they do not personally log each and every item for your review, you are probably involved in a serious scam. Some unscrupulous remediation companies have been known to use scare tactics to move out unsuspecting homeowners only to come back and rob them of all their belongings. Normally, they are never seen again. If someone tells you that you're going to die if you don't leave your home, call the police and get their tag number. Only a medical doctor should be giving you medical advice, not a contractor or inspector. Ultimately, a doctor can help you make an informed decision, unfortunately most cannot properly diagnose the problems at this time because of the lack of information and scientific studies.

6. Warning, if a remediation company ask for a large amount of money upfront, do your homework and insure they are a well established company in your state or nationally. Get references; call the Better Business Bureau, or the Department Of Business and Professional Regulation. Ask to see their licensing, insurance certificate, and company information and web site. Request a signed contract, invoice showing start up monies with a proper written release of lien notarized document. This approach will usually send a scammer down the road if you request all this information which should be considered normal. Do not leave your home and give them your keys for access until they furnish the proper paper work.

7. Beware of remediation companies that tell you all your personal belongings have to be thrown out when in fact they are being resold for a large profit. We have been able to determine through scientific analysis that some belongings and furniture may be saved under strict remediation protocols currently under development. We are working around the clock to understand the absorption rates of the many chemical compounds we are finding in 5 of the states we have inspected. Simply throwing everything out or tearing down a home is being publicized as the only real solution; however this is simply not true and only shows a lack of understanding when it comes to remediation protocols.

For further information about inspections, stabilization, remediation, and home warranties for Chinese and/or other defective drywall contact USBCI which uses multiple accredited testing facilities that can determine toxic-drywall problems. Spiderman Mulholland inspects, consults and has been retained as an expert in Chinese and/or other defective drywall cases.

To learn more about Spiderman Mulholland and USBCI, go online to www.usbcinc.com, or to arrange an interview, contact annie@usbcinc.com.