



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING
AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT**
WASHINGTON, DC 20410-1000

ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CONGRESSIONAL
AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

**U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT
SAFETY COMMISSION**
4330 EAST WEST HIGHWAY
BETHESDA, MD 20814

OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL
RELATIONS



February 16, 2010

The Honorable Glenn Nye
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Nye and Diaz-Balart:

Thank you for your January 13, 2010, letter to Secretary Shaun Donovan, Chairman Inez Tenenbaum, and Council on Environmental Quality Chair Nancy Sutley on behalf of the Congressional Contaminated Drywall Caucus. We understand the severe hardship that contaminated drywall is causing many families and want to assure you that the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) are working closely with each other as well as our other federal and state partners to develop identification protocols and possible remediation options as quickly as possible.

On October 29, 2009, representatives from CPSC, HUD, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (collectively the "Interagency Task Force on Problem Drywall" or "Task Force") released certain preliminary chemical analyses, chamber tests, and an initial indoor air sampling study of impacted homes. These tests were followed by the release of a more comprehensive fifty-one home indoor air study and two corrosion studies on November 23, 2009. As a result of this testing, the CPSC concluded that there is a strong association between the problem drywall, the hydrogen sulfide levels in homes with the drywall, and metal corrosion occurring in those homes.

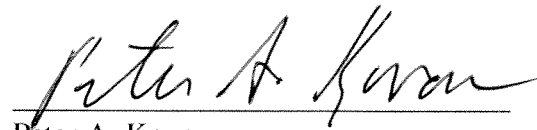
Based on these findings, HUD announced on December 22, 2009, that families with Federal Housing Administration (FHA)-insured loans who are experiencing problems associated with problem drywall may be eligible for assistance to help them rehabilitate their properties, and that the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program may be used for remediation of affected homes. HUD reminded its FHA-approved mortgage lenders that they may offer special forbearance for borrowers confronted with the sudden effects of damaging drywall products in their homes, including the financial hardship associated with related home repairs. We believe that FHA forbearance and the CDBG program offer potentially valuable assistance for families that are facing this problem, and we will be working to ensure that these options are given the fullest possible consideration going forward.

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The Task Force convened an Identification and Remediation Protocol Team to formulate a protocol that can be used to test homes to determine the presence of a corrosive environment and a process to remediate homes to address the corrosive effect of the drywall and the overall indoor air environment in those homes. On January 28, 2010, CPSC and HUD issued guidance on how to identify the presence of metal corrosion as well as other indicators of problem drywall in homes. The guidance takes into account visual signs of metal corrosion, evidence of drywall installation in the relevant time period, and the identification of other corroborating evidence or characteristics. CPSC and HUD, in conjunction with other members of the Task Force, hope to complete and release interim remediation guidelines in the near future.

Please know that we understand the hardship caused by contaminated drywall and assure you that this issue will be a top priority for both our agencies this year.

Very truly yours,



Peter A. Kovar
Assistant Secretary for Congressional
and Intergovernmental Relations
Department of Housing and
Urban Development



Christopher R. Day
Director
Office of Congressional Relations
U.S. Consumer Product Safety
Commission

cc: Nancy Sutley, Chair,
Council on Environmental Quality