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The Chinese Drywall Concern

The NFSA Quality Assurance Committee has asked for input from member contractors as to whether they have experienced problems due to the Chinese drywall issue. Some of the gypsum board manufactured in China and imported into the U.S. market has reportedly been found to give off a sulfur smell and result in corrosion of metals.

According to the Wall Street Journal, the problem first emerged in January of 2009 in a few dozen homes in Florida, but has since spread to other states. In Louisiana alone there have been more than 350 complaints. The Gypsum Association reports the U.S. imported enough drywall from China for 100,000 houses during the housing boom of 2004 to 2007.

Homeowners in newly-built houses have reported jewelry, pennies and electrical wiring turning black, which experts believe to be the result of sulfur-based gases escaping from the drywall. The fumes have also been associated with respiratory and sinus problems in some residents.

While the cause is not known, Florida state health officials found the problem drywall to have higher levels of sulfuric and organic compounds than in typical American-made drywall. The Chinese drywall contained traces of strontium sulfide, a gray powder not found in the domestic product, which emits a hydrogen sulfide or “rotten egg” odor when exposed to moist air. Experts note that while most problems to date have been reported in the more humid Southern states, problems could surface in dryer, cooler areas of the country over time.

The U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission is investigating the issue. NFSA members with information they would like to share with the NFSA Quality Assurance Committee should send it to fleming@nfsa.org.

New 50% “Business Thursday” Discounts Encourage ITM Training

As previously announced, the NFSA is coordinating its “Technical Tuesday” and “Business Thursday” seminars for the second half of 2009 to promote comprehensive training in the area of Inspection, Testing and Maintenance, helping individuals train for the work elements in the NICET Inspection and Testing certification program. Ten “Technical Tuesday” online training programs will be offered along with six “Business Thursday” online seminars. The seminars start at 10:30 am Eastern time (7:30 am Pacific time) and run from 60 minutes to 90 minutes in length, allowing participants to ask questions via e-mail. The seminars are priced at \$125 each. While the usual 30 percent discount will be available for the package of ten “Technical Tuesday” seminars, and a similar 30 percent discount will be available for the package of six “Business Thursday seminars”, the NFSA is also offering an unprecedented 50 percent discount for the six Business Thursday seminars to anyone who signs

up for the ten Technical Tuesday seminars. That's a total of only \$1250 for all 16 seminars, or about \$78 each. Fees are per connection, so it doesn't matter how many students are actually sitting in at a location. The two seminar series dovetail to allow a comprehensive review of both technical and nontechnical topics in the same overall subject area, aimed at NICET Inspection and Testing certification:

Technical Tuesdays – 2nd Half 2009

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Instructor(s)</i>
July 21	System Terminology	V. Valentine
Aug 4	Wet Systems and Testing Preparations	J. Hugo
Aug 25	Field Identification of Sprinklers	R. Fleming
Sept 15	Basic Math	V. Valentine
Sept 29	ITM for Dry Systems	K. Isman
Oct 13	ITM for Backflow Devices	K. Wiegand
Oct 27	ITM for Hose, Hose Connections & Valves	K. Isman
Nov 10	Tank Inspections	K. Isman
Nov 24	Obstruction Inspections and Investigations	R. Fleming
Dec 8	ITM for Preaction and Deluge Systems	C. Bilbo

Business Thursdays – 2nd Half 2009

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Instructor(s)</i>
July 30	Business & Professional Communications	R. Fleming
Aug 20	Impairment Procedures	K. Wiegand
Sept 24	Roles of the System Inspector and AHJ	R. Fleming & D. Kasmauskas
Oct 15	Inspection Contracts	M. Friedman
Nov 19	Planning and Scheduling	M. Friedman
Dec 3	Workplace Safety and the "Right to Know"	D. Bowman

NOTE: Although field personnel that might benefit from the training might not be available during hours of the original presentations, NFSA members are reminded that the seminars are accessible online for at least 24 hours following their original broadcast. Perhaps you should consider scheduling Wednesday/Friday training sessions for your personnel at your own company's convenience.

To register or for more information, contact Dawn Fitzmaurice at (845) 878-4207.

Additional training opportunities available through the NFSA engineering department include...

Two-Week Layout Technician Training

September 14-25, 2009	Baltimore, MD
October 12-23, 2009	Phoenix, AZ

Inspection and Testing for the Sprinkler Industry

July 21-23, 2009	St. Louis, MO
August 4-6 (rescheduled from June 16-18)	Leominster, MA
August 18-20, 2009	Wilmington, DE

For more information on the above classes, contact Nicole Sprague using Sprague@nfsa.org or by calling 845-878-4200 ext. 149.

In-Class Training Seminars

The NFSA training department also offers in-class training on a variety of subjects at locations across the country. Here are some upcoming seminars:

Hydraulics for Fire Protection	New Lenox, IL	July 7
NFPA 13 Overview	New Lenox, IL	July 8-9
Fire Pumps for Fire Protection	Denver, CO	July 7
Fire Pump Layout & Sizing (1/2 Day)	Denver, CO	July 8
Underground Piping for Fire Protection (1/2 Day)	Denver, CO	July 8
Inspection, Testing & Maintenance	Denver, CO	July 9
CPVC Piping Installation Requirements (1/2 Day)	Denver, CO	July 21
Sprinkler Protection for Flammable & Combustible Liquids	Denver, CO	July 21
Residential Sprinklers: Homes to High Rise	Denver, CO	July 22
Sprinkler Protection for Dwellings	Denver, CO	July 23
Commissioning and Acceptance Testing (1/2 Day)	Apple Valley, CA	July 28
CPVC Piping Installation Requirements (1/2 Day)	Apple Valley, CA	July 28
Inspection, Testing & Maintenance	Apple Valley, CA	July 29
Sprinkler Protection for Rack Storage	Apple Valley, CA	July 30
Inspection, Testing & Maintenance	Lake Jackson, TX	Aug 4
Hydraulics for Fire Protection	Lake Jackson, TX	Aug 5
NFPA 13 2007 Update	Lake Jackson, TX	Aug 6
Residential Sprinklers: Homes to High Rise	Rogers, AR	Aug 11
Sprinklers for Dwellings	Rogers, AR	Aug 12
Sprinkler Prot. for Flam. & Comb. Liquid Storage (1/2 Day)	Rogers, AR	Aug 13
CPVC Piping (1/2 Day)	Rogers, AR	Aug 13
NFPA 13 Overview	Kahului, HI	Aug 12-23
Inspection, Testing & Maintenance	Kahului, HI	Aug 14
NFPA 13 Overview	Brighton, MI	Aug 19-20
Sprinklers for Dwellings	Brighton, MI	Aug 21
NFPA 13 Update 2007	Aurora, IL	Aug 26
NFPA 13 Overview	Aurora, IL	Aug 27-28
NFPA 13 2007 Update	Boardman, OR	Sept 1
Hydraulics for Fire Protection	Boardman, OR	Sept 2
Inspection, Testing & Maintenance	Boardman, OR	Sept 3
Introduction to Sprinkler Systems (1/2 Day AM)	Alexandria, MN	Sept 8
NFPA 13 2002 Update (1/2 Day PM)	Alexandria, MN	Sept 8
Plan Review Policies & Procedures	Alexandria, MN	Sept 9
Inspection, Testing & Maintenance	Alexandria, MN	Sept 10
Commissioning & Acceptance Testing (1/2 Day)	Seattle, WA	Sept 15
CPVC Piping (1/2 Day)	Seattle, WA	Sept 15

Hydraulics for Fire Protection	Seattle, WA	Sept 16
Standpipe Systems for Fire Protection (1/2 Day)	Seattle, WA	Sept 17
Fire Pump Layout & Sizing (1/2 Day)	Seattle, WA	Sept 17
NFPA 13 2007 Update	Dayton, OH	Sept 16
Sprinkles for Dwellings	Dayton, OH	Sept 17
CPVC Piping Installation Requirements (1/2 Day)	Dayton, OH	Sept 18
Commissioning and Acceptance Testing (1/2 Day)	Dayton, OH	Sept 18
NFPA 13, 13R, 13D 2007 Update	Anaheim, CA	Sept 22
Hydraulics for Fire Protection	Anaheim, CA	Sept 23
Underground Piping (1/2 Day)	Anaheim, CA	Sept 24
Basic Seismic (1/2 Day)	Anaheim, CA	Sept 24
Plan Review Policies & Procedures	Berlin, VT	Sept 22
Sprinkler Protection for Rack Storage	Berlin, VT	Sept 23
CPVC Piping (1/2 Day)	Berlin, VT	Sept 24
Basic Seismic (1/2 Day)	Berlin, VT	Sept 24
Inspection, Testing & Maintenance	Concord, NH	Oct 13
Residential Sprinklers: Homes to High Rise	Concord, NH	Oct 14
Sprinklers for Dwellings	Concord, NH	Oct 15
Underground Piping (1/2 Day)	Woodland, CA	Oct 20
Commissioning & Acceptance Testing (1/2 Day)	Woodland, CA	Oct 20
Sprinkler Protection for General Storage	Woodland, CA	Oct 21
Sprinkler Protection for Special Storage	Woodland, CA	Oct. 22
Pumps for Fire Protection	Edwardsville, IL	Oct 27
Sprinkler Protection for General Storage	Edwardsville, IL	Oct 28
Sprinkler Protection for Rack Storage	Edwardsville, IL	Oct 29
NFPA 13 Overview	Pembroke, MA	Oct 27-28
Plan Review Policies & Procedures	Pembroke, MA	Oct 29
Inspection, Testing & Maintenance	Irving, TX	Oct 27
Hydraulics for Fire Protection	Irving, TX	Oct 28
NFPA 13, 13R, 13D 2007 Update	Irving, TX	Oct 29

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About the National Fire Sprinkler Association

Established in 1905, the National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFSA) is the voice of the fire sprinkler industry. NFSA leads the drive to get life-saving and property protecting fire sprinklers into all buildings; provides support and resources for its members – fire sprinkler contractors, manufacturers and suppliers; and educates authorities having jurisdiction on fire protection issues. Headquartered in Patterson, N.Y., NFSA has regional operations offices throughout the country.
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