



# EAGLE ONE HOME INSPECTIONS

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## **This month's featured topic:**

### **Chinese Drywall**

Starting in 2001, growing with the construction boom between 2004 and 2007, and blooming with the increased demand during reconstruction after Hurricane Katrina, American construction suppliers began importing drywall from China.

Chinese drywall can emit toxic sulfurous gases because it is often produced with lower-quality materials and production methods, which leave contaminants in the finished product; the decomposition of these contaminants is what produces the gases. These gases, in the short term, can cause sore throat, eye irritation, coughing, shortness of breath, chest pain, and nausea. Long term exposure has been associated with chronic fatigue, insomnia, loss of appetite, dizziness, irritability, headaches, and memory loss.

If you think your home may have Chinese drywall, check any exposed copper, like air conditioning coils, wiring connections and some cabinet/door hinges. Under normal conditions, copper slowly corrodes to a sea-green color (think the Statue of Liberty) or rarely a rusty reddish-brown. But in the presence of these gases, copper quickly develops a layer of ash-black corrosion. High temperatures and/or humidity have been associated with increased toxic gas emission.

A major producer/importer of Chinese drywall is Knauf Plasterboard Tianjin Co. Ltd. Their drywall will often be marked with "Made in China", "China", or "Knauf Tianjin". Most other contaminated drywall isn't labeled at all, making identification difficult, if not impossible. Most affected homes are in the Southeast, where most of the drywall was used in reconstruction after Hurricane Katrina. However, some homes in California, notably in Orange County, the San Francisco Bay Area and areas of the valley, have been found to contain Chinese drywall.

Those working in the Real Estate industry are advised to be wary of contractors from out of the area; some of them have been using this product on house renovations and "flips" here in the valley.

If you suspect that your home has Chinese drywall, it is recommended that you replace any suspect drywall, as well as any possibly damaged piping, air conditioning coils, electrical wiring, switches & outlets. If you start experiencing any of the symptoms listed above, get to fresh air immediately, and contact your local city/county health officials.

## **Tip of the month:**

Now might be a good time to change the batteries in your Smoke/CO Detectors, and test those units to ensure they are in working order. It is recommended to replace Smoke/CO detectors older than eight years.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese\\_drywall](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_drywall) (Accessed October 2012)  
Further information can easily be found with a Google search.