

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Building Owners Seek Class Action Status in Lawsuit
for Damages Caused to Thousands of Roofs by Corrosive Roof Insulation

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BOSTON, MASS. -- May 24, 1999 -- A lawsuit filed in federal district court here alleges that a roof insulation product which was popular in the 1980's and early 1990's has been found to leach acids which can corrode steel roof decks and the metal components of roofing systems. The plaintiffs have recently filed a motion which seeks to certify the lawsuit as a class action.

The plaintiffs' motion seeks to certify a class of building owners in the United States whose roofs contain Phenolic Foam Roof Insulation (PFRI) manufactured by Johns Manville Corporation of Denver, Colorado and Koppers Industries (later acquired by Beazer East, Inc.). The motion states that hundreds of millions of square feet of PFRI were installed in buildings across the country between 1981 and 1992.

Kenneth Gilman, one of the attorneys for the plaintiffs, stated that the motion to certify the case as a class action was filed because "we believe that there are thousands of building owners who do not know that they have PFRI in their roofs. PFRI was installed in thousands of high-occupancy and commercial buildings, including over 1,000 schools in the United States and Canada, as well as office buildings, condominium and apartment buildings, manufacturing facilities, restaurants, shopping plazas and malls." "We are particularly concerned that according to our investigation, many building inspectors are not aware of this problem," Gilman said. "Unfortunately, many building owners will not discover that PFRI is eating away at their roofs until it is too late to prevent serious damage."

The Plaintiffs are requesting that Manville and Beazer be required to publish and mail a comprehensive notice regarding the corrosive effects of PFRI to all affected building owners. In addition, the Plaintiffs want Beazer and Manville to pay for independent inspections of all roofs installed with PFRI, the removal of all PFRI and the repair of all roofing systems and roof decks damaged by PFRI.

Building owners may be able to determine whether they have PFRI in their roofs by examining their roofing system warranties or the original roof specifications to determine what type of insulation was used, said Gilman. PFRI was sold in the United States under the brand names "Exeltherm Xtra", "Rx," "Ultraguard Premier," "Weathertite Premier," "Insul-Base Premier" and "InsulShield Premier." However, PFRI was frequently substituted in place of the specified insulations, such as polyisocyanurate insulation. There are other methods for detecting the presence of PFRI.

Plaintiffs' lead counsel in the case is the law firm of Gilman and Pastor, LLP, of Boston, Massachusetts.

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PHENOLIC FOAM ROOF INSULATION QUESTIONNAIRE
FOR BUILDING INSPECTORS AND BUILDING CODE ADMINISTRATORS

Please complete this questionnaire and return to:

Gilman and Pastor, LLP
One Boston Place, 28th Floor
Boston, Massachusetts 02026
tel 617/589-3750
fax 617/589-3749
email kgg@gilmanpastor.com

1. Please state your name, address and title:

Tel: () _____
Fax: () _____

2. Have you or your office ever received a product alert bulletin concerning the risks associated with phenolic foam insulation?

yes no don't know

3. If your answer to question 2. was yes, please state:

date received _____

manufacturer _____

4. If your answer to question 2. was no, would you like more information concerning the risks associated with phenolic foam insulation?

yes no

5. Have you ever inspected a building which was insulated with phenolic foam?

yes no

6. Any other comments concerning phenolic foam insulation:

