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To whom it may concern:

I am Todd Cox, a former professional Firefighter and an insulation contractor. I retired from the Oklahoma City Fire Department after 22 years of service. For 21 years I was a Hazardous Materials Technician with the department. My insulation contracting firm of some 15 years, Weatherization Experts, is a BBB A+ Accredited Business and receives high ratings from Angie's List members as well. I believe I am qualified to comment on both firefighting and insulation. As an independent insulation contractor I can install any insulation material I choose. Based on my experience as a Firefighter and Hazardous Materials Officer I choose to install only cellulose insulation. I do not install foam or fiber glass.

I have viewed a segment on cellulose insulation apparently produced by CBS19 and broadcast on CBS19 and other Texas television stations. I totally disagree with comments made by Fire Marshal Johnny Zackary and reporter Amy Tatum. Contrary to claim made in this segment there is no evidence that cellulose insulation loses fire retardants over time. Fire does not spread more rapidly when cellulose insulation is present. In fact, studies show that cellulose insulation retains its fire retardant properties for the life of the building and cellulose actually slows the spread of fire. Also contrary to statements made by Ms. Tatum cellulose is not less expensive than fiber glass. Historically these materials have been comparably priced. Currently loose fill fiber glass tends to be slightly less expensive than cellulose. The report affects my business since it is available on the Internet and links to the segment are being circulated by those selling insulation products I believe to be less effective, less environmentally sound, and less safe than cellulose.

I have read the letter from Daniel Lea, executive director of the Cellulose Insulation Manufacturers Association, that accompanies this letter. I agree with and support every statement made by Mr. Lea. I join him in requesting that this segment be removed immediately from the CBS19 web site to prevent further dissemination of misinformation. I also join him in requesting the opportunity to meet with reporters and news executives of CBS19 to present evidence proving the claims made during the cellulose insulation segment are false and to develop a plan to mitigate the damage caused by this biased and misleading report.

Yours truly

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Todd L. Cox".

Todd L. Cox, President
Weatherization Experts Inc.

Your Energy Savings, Health & Comfort are Our Business!



Cellulose Insulation
Manufacturers Association

May 31, 2012

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Gentlemen:

CBS19 and other stations throughout Texas have aired a news segment apparently produced by CBS19 containing false statements by a Longview fire official about cellulose insulation. It's understandable that reporter Amy Tatum would unquestioningly accept the comments of Battalion Chief and Fire Marshal Johnny Zackary. It should be remembered, however, that even professionals – doctors, pilots, engineers, and, yes, fire chiefs – are subject to error. There are numerous errors in the statements by Chief Zackary and the commentary by reporter Tatum. Some are addressed below.

Experts say fire resistance of cellulose insulation...made up of recycled paper fades overtime.

False. This claim is based on an uncontrolled study by the California Bureau of Home Furnishings in which trays of cellulose insulation were stored in an open warehouse and tested at intervals for surface burning. There was no attempt to account for the effect of the accumulation of combustible dust on the surface of the insulation. CBHF itself described its data as “inconsistent and variable, and certainly not to be used to condemn this material.” No other credible reports of “disappearing fire retardants” exist. Published studies by Chiou and Yarbrough, US Borax, and numerous others document the permanency of fire retardants in cellulose insulation.

Fire spreads more rapidly than with fiberglass insulation.

False. In fact, fire roars right through fiber glass insulation, it melts, leaving framing lumber exposed to an abundant supply of oxygen. Tests by accredited private laboratories as well as the National Research Council of Canada prove that cellulose increases the fire resistance of insulated building assemblies. In a standard National Fire Protection Association test conducted at Intertek Laboratories, in Elmendorf, fiber glass insulation failed in 11 minutes, while cellulose had not reached any failure criteria at the 15 minute limit of the test. In several demonstration burns structures insulated with fiber glass have burned to the ground while cellulose-insulated structures have remained standing. In a demonstration at the Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute a fiber glass structure collapsed at 42:30; the cellulose structure remained standing for 67 minutes. It is quite possible fire fighters were able to save the home in Longview and its contents is because the cellulose insulation kept the fire confined to the attic area.

(Continued)

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John Gaston & Dan Delgado
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The reason homeowners use insulation made from recycled paper is the cost. A package of cellulose insulation is about \$10. The fiberglass insulation costs about \$30 a package.

False. Ms. Tatum appears to have looked only at the price of packages, not at coverage. The correct comparison would be the cost of equal R-values of loose fill cellulose insulation and loose fill fiber glass insulation. R-for-R these materials are comparable in price. Currently cellulose is likely to be slightly more expensive than fiber glass. The reason people choose cellulose isn't cost. It is thermal performance, dedication to green and sustainable building practices (cellulose is 85% recycled material and is produced with 1/10 the embodied energy of fiber glass), and for greater fire safety. When he built a new home after learning the truth about cellulose insulation and fire, CIMA's code consultant, a fire engineering graduate of the University of Maryland, elected to install cellulose insulation in interior and exterior walls, as well as the attic and vaulted ceiling areas, to provide greater fire protection.

Skip Whittle . . . says cellulose insulation just isn't worth the risk. "It takes more of that product to achieve some of the same value that you get from other types of insulation. Consequently, over time it settles and it loses some of its properties due to moisture in the attic or just over time and gravity."

In the broadcast portion of the interview I did not hear Mr. Whittle say that cellulose insulation "isn't worth the risk." That statement was made by Ms. Tatum. Mr. Whittle made some irrelevant comments about settlement that have nothing to do with fire or fire safety.

The problem is once it does catch on fire it will just sit there and smolder and burn for a long period of time.

This is true, and it is probably the reason fire fighters sometimes speak negatively of cellulose insulation. There is more work to be done in overhaul and cleanup. Mucking water-soaked insulation out of an attic isn't a pleasant job, but the reason there is anything left to overhaul may be because of the cellulose insulation. Cellulose insulation slows the spread of fire through insulated assemblies, giving building occupants more time to reach safety and for the fire company to reach the scene and possibly save the structure – as may have happened in Longview.

I request that you immediately remove this false and misleading segment from the CBS19 web site, and that news executives of CBS19 meet with us in the near future to discuss remedial action to mitigate the damage done by this report. You may call me at 888-881-2462 or directly at 937-405-5943 to discuss this matter.

Sincerely

Daniel Lea
Executive Director