

How to Spot Chinese Drywall

by Isaac Benmergui, Esq

In many homes built between 2001 and 2009, drywall from China was used in the construction process. Since then, it's been discovered that much of this drywall was defective. Many homes built in South Florida in 2006 were affected with this problem.

Not all homeowners report the rotten egg, sulfur or ammonia smells, but these smells can be a telltale sign of [Chinese drywall](#). The hydrogen sulfide that creates this smell is especially dangerous to growing children, and can affect their bones and nervous system.

The main problem is high levels of strontium in the mined gypsum used to make the drywall. The impurities result in corrosion of wiring and HVAC components throughout the home and emission of noxious fumes.

A licensed inspector can check for Chinese drywall during the routine home inspection. They will look for corrosion in the copper wires, and also blackening of the wires around the air conditioning system as well as appliances. Ask your inspector to check for signs of the drywall before going any further with the inspection.

Although homes built before 2000 will not have this issue, you need to be certain that there was no remodeling done between 2001 and 2007. The smell is less likely to be present in homes with just a few pieces of the drywall.

Look for information on the home's history of remodeling and remediation on the Seller's Disclosure. If there's no information, ask the real estate agent, or request a copy of the home owner's [inspection report](#) from when they purchased the home.

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