

These particular homes are three story townhouses and as you walked up the staircase to the main floor, the pungent smell of sulfur became stronger with each step. However, that wasn't the only sign of the toxic Chinese drywall. Each home I visited was also very cold, as heating units were damaged, and many residents weren't sure if turning them on would cause a fire or further damage to the unit.

Where walls had been removed you could see the copper electrical wiring corroding and one woman had hung jewelry on her wall and that too was corroding. Additionally, TV's, coffeemakers, computers, printers, virtually any electronic containing metal parts was either non-functioning or extremely damaged.

I spoke with a great number of the residents of Hollymeade, all of them middleclass folks who included service members, civil service employees, school teachers, and all types of private employees and small business owners. These are people who are comfortable, but not wealthy and can't afford to move out of their homes and pay their mortgages and rent on a temporary home. Some of the homeowners had top-secret clearances and if they allow their homes to lapse into foreclosure they could face the loss of the clearances, which could result in the loss of their job and further economic hardship.

Immediately following my visit I sent a letter to the Chairman of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission to urge them to expeditiously complete their study of the affected homes across the Country, so that action can be taken. The study was set to be completed at the end of this month, but has been postponed until sometime in November. With winter fast approaching, these folks cannot wait another minute for action. I will continue to do everything I possibly can to help the folks in this terrible situation. In the meantime, if your home has been affected by toxic Chinese drywall, please contact my Yorktown office at (757) 874-6687.

*Congressman Rob Wittman represents the First District of Virginia. He was elected to his first full term in November 2008 and serves on the Natural Resources Committee and the Armed Services Committee where he is the Ranking Member of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.*

