



October 25, 2005

**Formaldehyde Council, Inc., Statement on
The Safe Use of Formaldehyde in Wood Products**

Formaldehyde-based resins have a long history of safe, proven performance in products such as plywood and wood composites. Because of regulations and the combined efforts of science and the industries that make and use formaldehyde, the levels emitted into indoor air from wood products that contain formaldehyde have decreased dramatically over the past 30 years and now approach normal ambient background levels.

Government oversight and regulation of formaldehyde to ensure safety for workers and consumers is extensive. The U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration sets standards to protect workers, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Consumer Product Safety Commission set standards to protect human health and the environment.

It also is worthwhile to point out that formaldehyde is a widespread and natural constituent of all living systems. Indeed, it is one of the most abundant organic compounds in the universe. As life evolved on earth, formaldehyde became an important part of the process. Even the most primitive organisms relied on formaldehyde for the synthesis of more complex molecules. Due to its importance in metabolic processes, formaldehyde is naturally present in our bodies and is also found at low levels in the air we breathe.

With the discovery in 1979 that formaldehyde caused nasal cancer in laboratory rats following lifetime exposure to very high levels, an extensive effort was undertaken – and continues – to understand better the potential effects in humans.

Based on what we know today about formaldehyde toxicity, consumers and workers are protected when formaldehyde is handled and used properly and following government regulations. More information about formaldehyde and health may be found in the paper “Formaldehyde and Human Health,” which is available from the Formaldehyde Council, Inc. (FCI), and in the brochure “What is Formaldehyde?,” which also is available from the FCI or may be found on www.formaldehyde.org.

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