



HUD issues Chinese drywall guidelines

Published: Dec. 23, 2009 at 2:06 PM

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23 (UPI) -- Lenders should temporarily suspend or reduce mortgages for homeowners who have houses with tainted Chinese drywall, U.S. officials say.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development issued the guidelines to lenders Tuesday, also encouraging them not to charge late fees and allow time for such homeowners make up past-due payments, the South Florida Sun-Sentinel reported.

The newspaper said the new guidelines apply only to mortgages insured by HUD's Federal Housing Administration.

"We want to remove additional pressures for these families as they find solutions to allow them to return to a safe, decent and sanitary home," FHA commissioner David Stevens reportedly said.

The Sun-Sentinel said homeowners, many of them in Florida, have complained the defective drywall corrodes wiring, copper pipes, appliances and metals, but the Consumer Product Safety Commission has not yet linked it to any health risk.

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