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CDA MEDIA RELATIONS

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AIRPORT WINDOW TESTING REVEALS NO EVIDENCE OF HEALTH RISK FOR RESIDENTS

Independent testing finds screens as source of odors; CDA will develop a mitigation solution for homes affected by odorous windows

CHICAGO—The Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) today released findings by two independent experts that confirm there is no evidence of health risks in connection with the Residential Sound Insulation Program (RSIP) window products or the odors emitted from them. Extensive testing has determined that the primary source of the window odors is the PVC-coated screens found in many window installations.

“We are pleased that testing has finally determined the cause of this issue, and has confirmed that there is no evidence of a health risk caused by odors being emitted by RSIP windows,” said Erin O’Donnell, Managing Deputy Commissioner of Midway International Airport. “With these answers, the department can now turn its attention to the work that must be done next in coordinating a solution for those affected residents.”

Two key findings have been identified through extensive testing by industrial hygiene expert Amec Foster Wheeler (now known as Wood) and architectural testing expert Intertek-ATI (Intertek). First, the primary source of the window odors are the PVC-coated screens found in many window installations; and second, testing has affirmed that there is no evidence of health risks in connection to RSIP window products or the odors emitted.

Overall, laboratory testing also indicates that elevated temperature contributed to the rate of off-gassing.

“Based on odor screening and laboratory testing, we have identified a cause for the odors observed: the Sound Solutions screens are a significant contributor,” said Chris Everts, P.E., Ph.D. and Amec (Wood) Environmental Engineer. “Exposure to high temperatures can cause most vinyl window products irrespective of the manufacturer to originate odors. Going forward, we are committed to working with the City as well as Intertek to establish an effective mitigation program for the community.”

The Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) has reviewed the results of this testing, as it did in the first round of testing performed months ago. The CDPH has studied both the methodology and findings of the third-party testing, including the two forms of laboratory testing, as well as UV testing of windows.

"The CDA and its outside experts have developed a substantial body of data while investigating the issue of odorous windows," said CDPH Commissioner, Julie Morita, M.D. "The CDPH has concluded that there is no evidence of a health risk and also that it is highly unlikely that windows pose any impact to indoor air quality."

With expert findings determining the cause of the matter, the CDA will develop a mitigation solution for homes affected by odorous windows to implement beginning this fall.

For assistance with interim steps or for any questions, residents can call the Midway RSIP office at (773) 838-5632 - or the O'Hare RSIP office at (773) 894-3636.

To review the full report, and more information about the RSIP, please visit CDA's website at www.FlyChicago.com.

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