

# Mold-Inhibitor Safety

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## Sheetrock® Mold Tough™ Gypsum Panels

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**Why has USG added mold inhibitors to its SHEETROCK® brand MOLD TOUGH™ gypsum panels?**

Since 2001, USG has recommended and promoted a policy of comprehensive water management during all phases of the construction process and throughout the building lifecycle. Our position has always been that proper building design, construction and maintenance is paramount in controlling moisture issues. With the advent of new technologies, however, we thought it appropriate to investigate and, if appropriate, introduce new products to complement—not replace—our water management policy. While there is no “silver bullet” product that can eliminate mold in buildings or make a product mold-proof, sodium pyrithione was selected as an appropriate mold inhibitor after a two-year investigation by USG because of its efficacy, long usage history by the public and extensive scientific documentation.

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**Are there potential environmental hazards associated with sodium pyrithione?**

While many chemicals, including mold inhibitors, can be toxic if used improperly, they can also be used safely with proper regulation of concentration of dose and duration of exposure. The EPA has approved the use of sodium pyrithione at prescribed safe concentration levels in wallboard.

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**Has the EPA investigated sodium pyrithione?**

Sodium pyrithione has been registered with the EPA FIFRA for use in gypsum wallboard and many other uses, including retail consumer products. Both the process of registration and the amount of data needed to meet registration criteria are extensive.

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**Why doesn't the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for SHEETROCK MOLD TOUGH gypsum panels include more information about sodium pyrithione?**

The MSDS for products containing sodium pyrithione provides information that sodium pyrithione is present. This information allows others to evaluate any potential hazards by providing both the identity of the chemical and the potential dose exposure for a worker. There are no health effects or safety hazards associated with sodium pyrithione either in the product itself or during the lifecycle of the product. Therefore, no environmental health and safety statements about sodium pyrithione in the MSDS are necessary.

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**Does the presence of sodium pyrithione in drywall affect building occupants?**

USG gypsum panels containing sodium pyrithione are designed and manufactured for application and finishing in building interiors. Since building occupants with health issues may be vulnerable or sensitive to exposures, sodium pyrithione was selected by USG for the manufacture of these panels because this additive is bound up in the panel and does not escape for the life of the panel. There is no chemical exposure for building inhabitants and consequently, no health effects. VOC emission testing on gypsum panels containing sodium pyrithione shows no detection of sodium pyrithione. In fact, when tested according to the most sensitive and stringent method, the panels show no emissions of VOCs or formaldehyde.

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**Does sodium pyrithione affect the soil if gypsum panels are recycled as a soil amendment?**

USG evaluated the land application of gypsum panels containing sodium pyrithione. Sodium pyrithione has not been successfully used as a pesticide and it is not registered for pesticide use due to its ineffective behavior in the soil. Sodium pyrithione rapidly disintegrates in the ambient environment due to sunlight (UV radiation). Note that there are guidelines and restrictions on the application of gypsum to soil.

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**What happens to the sodium pyrithione in case of fire?**

In case of fire, the sodium pyrithione in the panels does not break down to hazardous substances other than oxides of carbon. The sodium pyrithione manufacturer indicates that fire hazard is not applicable to the material.

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**Can gypsum wallboard containing sodium pyrithione be recycled?**

Wallboard containing sodium pyrithione can be recycled in the same manner as any other gypsum panel.

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**How is sodium pyrithione used in other products?**

Sodium pyrithione is used in household products such as laundry detergents, carpet cleaners and shampoos. Industrial uses include for the dry film preservation of natural and synthetic adhesives, latexes, urethane foams, caulks, patching compounds, sealants, architectural paints, industrial paints and coatings, pastes and grouts.

**Product Information**

See usg.com for the most up-to-date product information.

**Trademarks**

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**Safety First!**

Follow good safety and industrial hygiene practices during handling and installation of all products and systems. Take necessary precautions and wear the appropriate personal protective equipment as needed. Read material safety data sheets and related literature on products before specification and/or installation.

