



Nov. 30, 2005

**Formaldehyde Council, Inc., Statement on  
Columbia Forest Products' Decision to Eliminate Formaldehyde  
From Standard Hardwood Plywood Production**

While we are disappointed with Columbia Forest Products' (CFP's) decision to convert its veneer-core hardwood plywood plants to formaldehyde-free manufacturing processes, we remain fully confident in the safety of formaldehyde-based resins. Formaldehyde-based resins have a long history of safe, proven product performance. Indeed, all relevant scientific evidence has confirmed that formaldehyde emissions from plywood are well below levels that could produce adverse health effects.

Government oversight and regulation of formaldehyde to ensure its safe use 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 natural part of our world. We make it in our bodies and it occurs naturally in the air we breathe. Manmade formaldehyde is no different from naturally occurring formaldehyde. It is rapidly metabolized, and does not persist in the environment or accumulate in the body.

In a news release announcing its decision, CFP noted that the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) recently classified formaldehyde as "carcinogenic to humans." IARC made its decision primarily on what it said was "sufficient evidence that formaldehyde causes nasopharyngeal cancer in humans."

However, a review by an expert biostatistician of the principal National Cancer Institute (NCI) study upon which the IARC based its decision found inconsistencies that may have produced incomplete results. Based largely on the results of this FCI-commissioned review, which has been accepted for publication in the peer-reviewed journal *Regulatory Toxicology and Pharmacology*, the NCI is now updating that study to resolve those inconsistencies. The results of this study update will allow for a more informed scientific evaluation and, therefore, enhanced environmental health decision making regarding formaldehyde.

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In the meantime, we are confident that consumers and workers are protected when formaldehyde is handled and used properly and following government regulations. You can find much more information about formaldehyde and health by visiting [www.formaldehyde.org](http://www.formaldehyde.org).

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