

PRESS RELEASE *for immediate distribution*

Industry moves forward on the implementation of safety measures

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ISOPA is aware of recent health complaints in the period following the application of polyurethane spray foam in residential areas, and expresses sympathy with those who have experienced ill health. ISOPA, and the polyurethanes industry, take the issues of health and safety very seriously. It is in all of our interests that our products are safe.

ISOPA spokesman Erik Vangronsveld states *“polyurethane spray foam insulation, when used correctly and as intended, poses no risk to human health and safety, and it has been safely applied in over 10,000 crawl spaces annually in the Netherlands for the past 30 years.”* Polyurethane spray foam has consistently been the material of choice for consumers looking to improve home insulation given it is one of the most efficient materials for lowering energy bills by upgrading the energy efficiency standard of existing building stock. Polyurethane spray foam is also exceptionally versatile given its ability to insulate small, complex-shaped spaces compared to polyurethane rigid foam insulation panels, which like other polyurethane-based products are delivered and installed ready-made and are completely inert.

While the cause of recent health complaints in the Netherlands remains unknown, ISOPA takes each case very seriously and industry has come together to take concrete actions to further improve the safety of the application of polyurethane spray foam. ISOPA considers information and communication regarding the safe application of polyurethane spray foam systems to be key elements to maintaining the industry's proven health and environmental safety record. It has taken the immediate step of engaging with licensed applicators and calling on them to ask customers to voluntarily leave their homes during application, just as is best practice for all construction works, until further scientific data is available. We at ISOPA have proactively been in close contact with both Dutch authorities and other stakeholders to create an industry-initiated programme which will lead to measurable improvements in safety standards. The elements of the programme have been decided, and implementation commenced in the first quarter of 2013. Key actions supported by industry include:

- Mandatory vacancy of homes during and shortly after licensed operators apply polyurethane spray foam in crawl spaces. The home must also remain vacant during the required ventilation period following application.
- Mandatory certification of professional polyurethane spray foam operators, including stricter safety requirements with regards to equipment and raw material handling.
- A mandatory training and inspection scheme for the safe application of polyurethane spray foam by all licensed operators.

A very important and new element of the programme will be improved communications with the consumer, before sale, and during and after the application of polyurethane spray foam, to ensure safety measures are adhered to at every step of the application process.

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ISOPA is the European trade association for manufacturers of aromatic diisocyanates and polyols, the main raw materials used to make polyurethanes.