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Spray-Foam Endangers Occupants' Health, Lawsuits Allege

Homeowners blame manufacturers for alleged damage to their health and homes.

By Paula Melton

Spray polyurethane foam (SPF) is about to go on trial in several states.

Federal lawsuits against a number of manufacturers and installers of the insulation have been filed throughout the U.S., according to Scott Gibson at the website GreenBuildingAdvisor.com, with homeowners claiming they have been forced out of their homes due to health problems that include chemical sensitivity and neurological damage.

Attorney Vince Pravato, best known as one of the lawyers who helped win [a class-action lawsuit against drywall manufacturers in China](#), told Gibson that SPF manufacturer Demilec came up most frequently in the lawsuits due to alleged defects in everything from manufacturing to labeling to installer training.

"Most often," Gibson reports, "the affected homeowners were in their homes at the time the foam was sprayed or returned home immediately afterward." Such practices fly in the face of [guidelines published by the American Chemistry Council](#) (PDF), which state that installers should "carefully schedule construction activities so that no other trades or occupants are in the area during SPF installation" and "vacate building occupants and non-SPF personnel from the structure during the spray application process and for a period of time after completion."

Poor jobsite safety measures like these have led the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to [take action on spray-foam health risks](#) as well.

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