



Thomas G. Williamson
Vice President
Quality Assurance and Technical Services

May 1, 2009

WISH-TV Channel 8
1950 N. Meridian St
Indianapolis, IN 46202

Dear Sir/Madam:

We were just made aware of your news report that will be broadcast tonight at 11PM, regarding concerns over the burn rates of wood I-joists. Please consider the following key points.

First, the time of origin of a fire, how long it has been at any given temperature, the design capacity and actual loads on the floors over the fire and other specific circumstances make it impossible to predict the remaining capacity of a floor system in a real-life fire whether supported by dimensional lumber, wood I-joists or other structural system.

Second, and more importantly, the fire endurance of any floor joist system can be dramatically improved simply by applying a single layer of ½-inch-thick gypsum wallboard. For years, gypsum wallboard has been used to great effect as fire protection for wood framed walls and ceilings, and serves the same purpose for floors. Fire tests conducted at independent test laboratories show it will very likely more than double the fire endurance time for all commonly used wood floor joist systems, including sawn-lumber, open web wood trusses and wood I-joists. In addition, residential homeowners are used to having gypsum applied to the framing system for finished appearances.

APA – The Engineered Wood Association is a not-for-profit trade association representing a majority number of I-joist manufacturers in North America and we recommend the use of gypsum wallboard on the underside of all I-joists used in floor/ceiling assemblies over habitable spaces as a simple and economical way to dramatically improve residential fire safety. I've attached a short technical paper on this subject for your reference.

Thanks for your consideration, and please don't hesitate to call me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Williamson".

TGW

APA-The Engineered Wood Association (APA) is a nonprofit trade association of the U.S. and Canadian engineered wood products industry. Based in Tacoma, Washington, the Association is comprised of and represents manufacturers of structural plywood, oriented strand board, glued laminated (glulam) timber, wood I-joists, and laminated veneer lumber (LVL). APA's primary functions are quality auditing and testing, product application and systems research, and market support and development.

REPRESENTING THE ENGINEERED WOOD INDUSTRY

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