

# Some decks could pose risk

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Louisiana-Pacific Corp. has issued a product advisory for its wood-plastic composite deck and railing products made after Jan. 1, 2005, that warns the product "can prematurely deteriorate and break, posing a risk of injury to consumers."

LP spokeswoman Mary Cohn said the problem showed up on less than one-half of 1 percent of LP-made composite products, but the company is sensitive to the potential risk of injury.

The affected products were sold under the WeatherBest name at deck and fence dealers nationwide, and under the Veranda and ABTCO labels at Home Depot stores in the West, LP said.

Nashville, Tenn.-based LP exited the composite decking market, selling its 175,000-square-foot Meridian, Idaho, extrusion facility and the WeatherBest brand to New London, N.C.-based Fiber Composites LLC in July 2007.

Fiber Composites uses a different formulation and has nothing to do with the advisory, Cohn said in an Aug. 8 telephone interview. Fiber Composites officials could not be reached for comment.

LP is committed to remedying any problems related to its products, including replacement of entire decks if needed, Cohn said.

"Our company places an extremely high value on safety," she said. "We're trying to be proactive."

LP officials have not yet pinpointed the problem.

"We're investigating that right now," Cohn said. "As people register, we'll have a better database to investigate."

LP is arranging to have inspectors visit homeowners who register complaints to determine the severity of any deck deterioration.

Among the problems cited are visible cracking, surface deterioration and chipping of the surface layer. Consumers are being advised to stay off their decks if they see any of those problems. Consumers who purchased their decks after Jan. 1, 2005, are encouraged to register them for inspection, even if the decks appear to be fine.

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