



Natural Stone Industry Fights Back Against False Advertising Claims

It is unfortunate that there is so much mis-information out there in regards to granite countertops. While granite countertops have gained popularity and competition over the years, the number of myths have also increased. There are myths about sealing, cleaning & maintenance, material composition, cost, etc., that catch consumers attention. However, the more recent rumor, of radon gas and granite countertops has caught some national attention, and the natural stone industry is fighting back!

Some engineered stone manufacturers and companies who produce home safety equipment, are to blame for many of the myths and rumors that exist. While it is sad, it has been a way for them to gain market share for their products. The MIA (Marble Institute of America), has recently “chosen to pursue legal action by filing a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission’s Bureau of Consumer Protection against Home Safety Systems of Stillwater, MN citing gross misstatements in a print and advertising campaign for its radon detectors. The complaint, which the MIA has filed, alleges that advertisements which allege that granite-based products emit dangerous levels of radon gas are both fraudulent and misleading. If the MIA is successful in proving its allegations with the FTC, the FTC may order a cease and desist order precluding future dissemination of this advertising message and/or levy a fine against the particular company who launched the misleading campaign.”¹ The advertising campaign generated by Home Safety Systems, was aired on the Paul Harvey radio show. A letter from the MIA has also been sent to ABC Radio, who airs the Paul Harvey program, which addresses their claim and has requested them to no longer air such false advertising claims.

The bottom line is that emissions from granite are minuscule and they definitely do not impose any health concerns including cancer. The MIA has worked with many experts and has done various tests to substantiate these false claims. One expert, Dr. Donald Langmuir, a geochemistry PHD from Harvard University, concluded, “The amount of radon released from a typical granite countertop is certain to be completely negligible and well below detection by any known method of radioactive analysis. I would suggest that a good way to reduce our exposure to radon present in outdoor air would be to build an air-tight house out of granite countertops.”²

It is very sad that some companies go to lengths such as lying to try to sell their products. In the long run it hurts both the natural stone industry, as well as the companies who are making the false claims. It also hurts the consumer who ends up being confused and doesn’t know what to believe. Fortunately there are some consumers out there that do their homework and make their decisions based on it. Hopefully you’ll be one of them.

Source:

¹Marble Institute of America, “The Cutting Edge,” October 2007 Newsletter pg. 8,

²Marble Institute of America, “The Cutting Edge,” November 2007 Newsletter pg. 1

X:\miscell\natural stone industry fights back against false advertising claims.doc

5760 Quam Avenue N.E. • St. Michael, MN 55376 • Phone: (763) 428-4075 • Fax: (763) 428-1795
www.paramountgranite.com • E-Mail: info@paramountgranite.com

