

# Environmental and Sustainable Technology Evaluation: Mold-Resistant Amerrock Insulation – Amerrock Products, LP, Premium Plus™ Rockwool Insulation



Prepared by  
Research Triangle Institute



For  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Research and Development- Environmental Technology Verification Program

RTI International/EPA  
April 2013

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**THE ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGY VERIFICATION PROGRAM  
Environmental and Sustainable Technology Evaluation (ESTE)**



**ESTE Joint Verification Statement**

<b>TECHNOLOGY TYPE:</b>	<b>Mold-Resistant Insulation Product</b>
<b>APPLICATION:</b>	<b>Insulation</b>
<b>TECHNOLOGY NAME:</b>	<b>Premium Plus™ Rockwool Insulation</b>
<b>COMPANY:</b>	<b>Amerrock Products, LP</b>
<b>ADDRESS:</b>	<b>Nolanville, Texas</b>

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has created the Environmental Technology Verification (ETV) Program to facilitate the deployment of innovative or improved environmental technologies through performance verification and dissemination of information. The goal of the ETV Program is to further environmental protection and sustainability by accelerating the acceptance and use of improved and cost-effective technologies. ETV seeks to achieve this goal by providing high quality, peer-reviewed data on technology performance to those involved in the purchase, design, distribution, financing, permitting, and use of environmental technologies. This verification was conducted under the Environmental and Sustainable Technology Evaluation (ESTE) element of the ETV Program that was designed to address agency priorities for technology verification.

This ESTE project involved evaluation of the mold resistance of Amerrock Premium Plus™ Rockwool insulation. Tests for emissions of VOCs and formaldehyde were also performed. For this project Research Triangle Institute (RTI) was the responsible contractor for EPA Office of Research and Development, National Risk Management Research Laboratory (NRMRL).

This verification statement provides a summary of the test results for Amerrock Premium Plus™ Rockwool insulation.

### **TECHNOLOGY DESCRIPTION**

The following description of the product was provided by the vendor and was not verified. Amerrock Premium Plus™ Rockwool insulation is a 100% natural spray insulation. It is made from trap rock and steel slag and contains no chemicals other than annealing oil for dust suppression. When sprayed in place, the interlocking fibers permanently bond to the sheathing material. Premium Plus™ insulation is used in new and existing construction in both the exterior and interior walls.

Figure S-1 shows a representative piece of the material.



**Figure S-1. Premium Plus™ Rockwool Insulation**

### **VERIFICATION TEST DESCRIPTION**

Verification testing of the Amerrock Premium Plus™ Rockwool insulation began on November 10, 2010 at the microbiology laboratories of RTI International and was completed on February 3, 2011. All tests were performed according to the ETV Program’s “Test/QA Plan for Mold-Resistant Building Material Testing.” Mold resistance testing was performed following the guidelines outlined in ASTM 6329. ASTM 6329 provides a quantitative endpoint for growth in a well-controlled, static chamber environment. The method has been successfully used to evaluate fungal resistance on a variety of materials including ceiling tiles and HVAC duct materials.

In overview, the Premium Plus™ Rockwool insulation roll was pulled apart in small clumps for use. Because of the type and structure of the material, the test piece sizes were made as similar as possible. The material was not autoclaved or sterilized prior to inoculation. Therefore, in addition to the test organism inocula, any organisms naturally on both the top and bottom surfaces of the material had the opportunity to grow if conditions were favorable for growth. The test organisms were inoculated by pipette directly onto the surface of each test material piece in sufficiently high numbers to provide an adequate challenge, but at a level that is realistic to quantify. The tests ran for 12 weeks. During the 12 week test period, data from four test dates, labeled Day 0, Week 1, Week 6, and Week 12, were evaluated. Day 0 samples provided the baseline inoculum level. A sufficient number of test pieces were inoculated simultaneously for all four test dates. All pieces for one material and one test organism were put in the same static chamber. Because ASTM D6329 calls for a reference material similar to the test material, the reference material chosen for comparison was blown-in insulation purchased from a local home improvement chain store.

Two test organisms, *Stachybotrys chartarum* and *Aspergillus versicolor* were used. The static chambers were set to 100% equilibrium relative humidity (ERH) for the tests with *S. chartarum* and to 85% ERH for *A. versicolor*. On each test date (including Day 0), five replicates of the test material pieces were removed from the chamber, each was placed separately in a container with sterile buffer, and extracted by shaking. The resulting suspension of eluted organisms was plated and microbial growth on materials was quantified by manually enumerating colony-forming units (CFU).

The numbers of CFU eluted on test dates Weeks 1, 6, and 12 were compared to the baseline at Day 0. The numbers of CFU were expressed as  $\log_{10}$ . The results are reported as the  $\log_{10}$  change in CFUs between Day 0 and Week 1, Day 0 and Week 6, and Day 0 and Week 12.

Additional measurements included VOC and aldehyde emissions; these were performed by RTI following ASTM D5116-06.

## **VERIFICATION OF PERFORMANCE**

The results for the Mold Resistance tests are presented in the Figures S-2 and S-3. Growth is measured by sporulation and is defined as at least a 1  $\log_{10}$  increase in culturable organism over the baseline which was determined on Day 0.

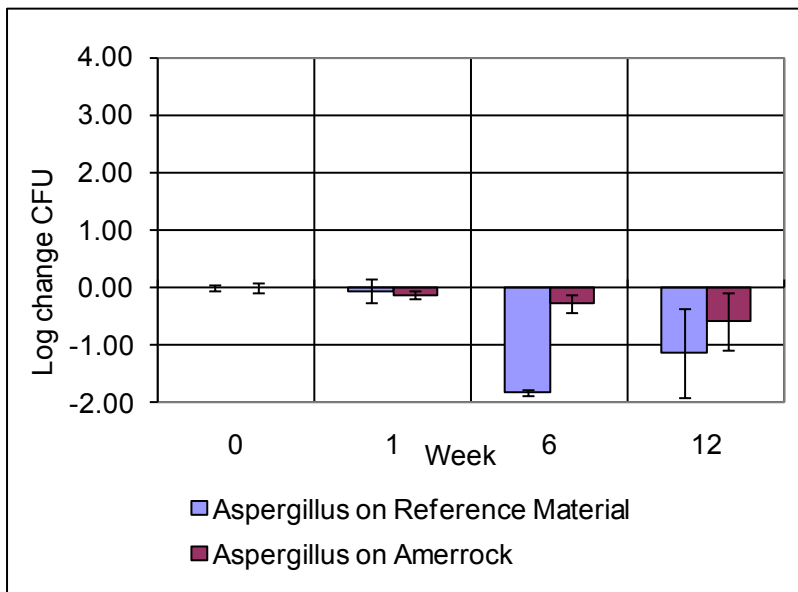
Figure S-2 shows the log change in *A. versicolor* and Figure S-3 shows the log change in *Stachybotrys chartarum* on both the test and reference materials as well as the growth of naturally occurring fungi on the reference material.

Neither the test material nor the reference material inoculated with *A. versicolor* and incubated at 85% ERH showed growth during the 12 weeks of the test.

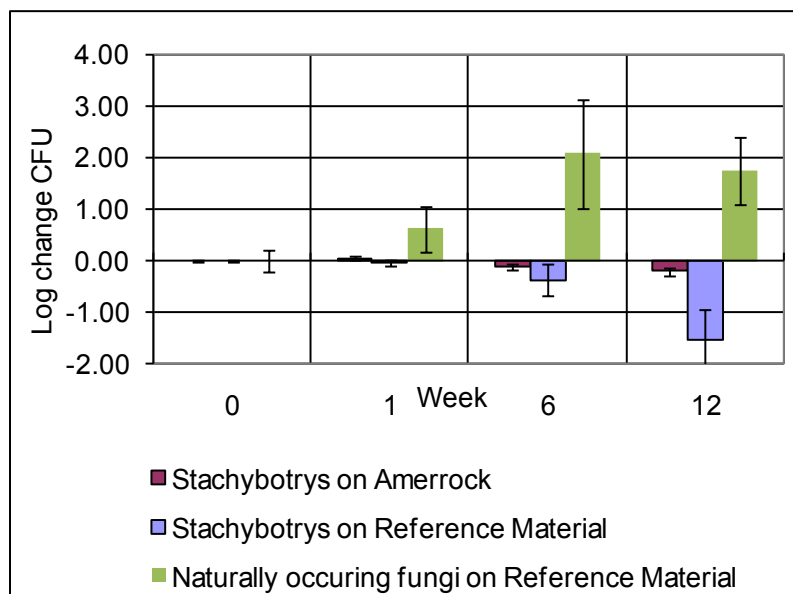
Neither the test material nor the reference material inoculated with *S. chartarum* and incubated at 100% ERH showed growth during the 12 weeks of the test. The growth of a variety of fungal species (naturally occurring on the sample) on some pieces of the reference material made it difficult to accurately assess the *S. chartarum* growth on the reference material.

At Day 0 the numbers of naturally occurring fungi were below the detection limit on both the test and the reference materials. However, the growth of the naturally occurring fungi on the reference material became a notable quantity by week 6.

The quality assurance officer reviewed the test results and the quality control data and concluded that the data quality objectives given in the approved test/QA plan were attained.



**Figure S-2. Log change in *Aspergillus versicolor* inoculated on the test material over 12 weeks on the insulation reference material and Amerrock.**



**Figure S-3. Log change in *Stachybotrys chartarum* inoculated on the test material over 12 weeks on the insulation reference material and Amerrock.**

The emissions of VOCs and formaldehyde test results are presented in Table S-1.

**Table S-1. Test results for VOCs and formaldehyde emissions from Amerrock**

VOCs and Formaldehyde Emissions*	
Emission Types	Minimum emission results
Total VOCs	< 0.5 mg/m <sup>3</sup>
Formaldehyde	<0.1 ppm
Individual VOCs	< 0.1 TLV

\*Individual pollutants must produce an air concentration level no greater than 1/10 the threshold limit value (TLV) industrial workplace standard (Reference: American Conference of Government Industrial Hygienists, 6500 Glenway, Building D-7, Cincinnati, OH 45211-4438).

This verification statement discusses two aspects of Mold-Resistant Building Material Testing, mold resistance and emissions of VOCs and formaldehyde. Users of this technology may wish to consider other performance parameters such as fire resistance, service life, and cost when selecting a building material. According to the test/QA plan, this verification statement is valid for 3 years following the last signature added on the verification statement.

Details of the verification test design, measurement test procedures, and Quality Assurance/Quality Control Procedures can be found in the Test Plan titled *Test/QA Plan for Mold-Resistant Building Material Testing* (RTI 2008). Detailed results of the verification are presented in the Final Report titled *Environmental and Sustainable Technology Evaluation: Mold-Resistant Amerrock Insulation – Amerrock Products, LP, Premium Plus Rockwool Insulation* (NRMRL-RTP-460). Both can be downloaded from the ETV Program website (<http://www.epa.gov/etv/este.html#mrbmgw>).

Signed by Cynthia Sonich-Mullin 4/1/2013  
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