

Magnesium at Heart of Fire Retardant Technology

by Ellsworth Dickson

Accidental fires remain one of the most fearsome and destructive forces we have to face. In the United States alone, 2002 saw an estimated \$8.7 billion in direct residential and commercial building property damage – not to mention significant injuries and loss of life.

Since 1986 International Barrier Technology Inc. [IBH-TSXV; IBTGF-OTCBB] has been developing, manufacturing and marketing fire resistant building materials. While the specific formula for its non-combustible, non-toxic Blazeguard® brand of products is proprietary, Dr. Michael Huddy, president, says it contains magnesium and has the unique capability of releasing water when exposed to the heat of fire. On June 3 of this year Barrier completed the acquisition from Pyrotite Corporation of the Pyrotite fire retardant technology, Pyrotite trademark, U.S. and international patents and know-how for US \$1 million.

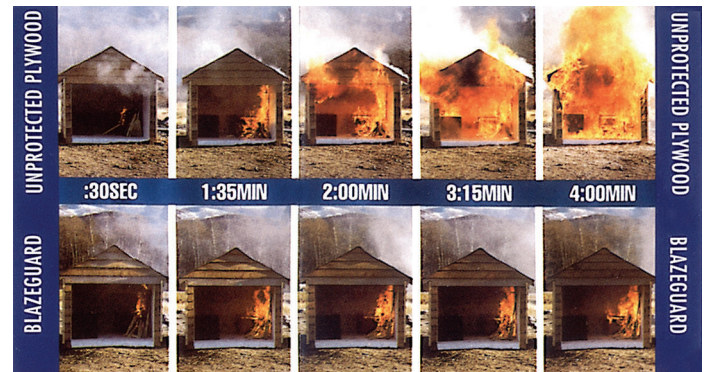
The acquisition will now enable the company to expand its market opportunities and sales in new countries, develop new applications and grow through licensing agreements. The expected sales increase will be in addition to sales volume records for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2004. For the latest fiscal year, the sales volume of 3,359,600 square feet of fire resistant wood paneling recorded an increase of 60% over the previous fiscal year. In addition, for the latest fiscal fourth quarter, the sales volume of 1,278,300 square feet was 113% greater than the previous comparable fourth quarter. The increased sales is attributed to strong demand for roof deck applications for multi-family housing in Florida and the mid-Atlantic regions of the United States as well as sales of fire-rated sheathing for the commercial modular building market through an agreement with Mule-Hide Products. For the fiscal third quarter sales totaled \$1,327,664, a year-

over-year increase of 187% with fiscal nine-month sales reaching \$2,454,018, a 50.2% increase over the previous comparable period.

Blazeguard® fire rated wood panels comprise a sheet of oriented strand board or plywood with a thin coating of the Pyrotite fire resistant formulation. The panels have a Class A structural flame spread rating making the burn-through resistance nearly triple that of untreated wood panels.

Huddy says, “With the credibility and sales we have established for Blazeguard® in Florida and the mid-Atlantic, we are preparing to enter the large and untapped western region. We estimate the total U.S. market potential for roof sheathing alone for a structural Class A rated material like Blazeguard® will soon exceed 200 million square feet.”

In addition to North American expansion plans, the company has been holding discussions for sales and license opportunities with parties representing interests in Japan, China, Mexico, Ireland, Great Britain, Saudi Arabia and India. 🏠



A sequence of photographs depicting the development of a wood fire with and without Blazeguard® coated panels. Photo courtesy International Barrier Technology Inc.