

# Blazeguard

## Minnesota firm produces patented fire-resistant construction product

**I**nternational Barrier Technology, Inc., based in Watkins, Minn., develops, manufactures and markets proprietary fire-resistant building materials branded as Blazeguard.

Blazeguard wood panels use a patented, non-toxic, non-combustible coating that combines properties that increase panel strength and minimize environmental and human impact, according to Mike Huddy, president and chief executive officer of International Barrier Technology.

The compound is designed to release water when exposed to the extreme heat of fire, absorbing and cooling the heat of fire.

The Minnesota firm recently acquired patents to Pyrotite Fire Retardant Technology.

Pyrotite was designed to prevent ignition and inhibit the spread of flames. According to Huddy, Pyrotite can triple the burning resistance of wood.

International Barrier Technology's first commercial application of Pyrotite is as a coating on plywood and oriented strand board (OSB) to create a fire-retardant structural wood sheathing.

Blazeguard essentially is a treatment for wood panels that actually serves to lock hydrogen and oxygen into the coating on a panel. If a fire strikes, these are released and combined to form water.

The product is rapidly catching on throughout the United States, Huddy says.

"Weyerhaeuser, who spent more than a million dollars assessing 80 different fire-retardant wood products, concluded Blazeguard was a superior technology, and now is used by four of the top five U.S. home builders for multi-family construction."



Huddy reports that his company currently has a backlog on orders and is expanding its manufacturing capacity to meet the growing demand.

The company, which lists 16 employees, has invested more than \$2 million to upgrade and expand its prototype plant in Watkins. ■

Top: International Barrier Technology has developed a composite wood sheathing coated in Pyrotite, which the firm indicates makes it three times as resistant to fire as unprotected wood. In this graphic, the building on the top is unprotected plywood. The building on the bottom uses the sheathing, which sells under the brand name of Blazeguard.

Right: Mike Huddy is president and chief executive officer of International Barrier Technology Inc., Watkins, Minn.



Below: Blazeguard consists of sheets of oriented strand board (OSB) or plywood combined with a coating of patented Pyrotite.

