Ronald McDonald House Unveils Shiny, Bacteria-Killing Renovation

CHARLESTON, S.C. (February 16, 2012) — The Ronald McDonald House of Charleston (RMHC) will today unveil an unprecedented renovation featuring bacteria-killing Antimicrobial Copper to further protect the health of the vulnerable patients and families it serves. The extensive renovation, which makes RMHC the first nonprofit temporary residence facility in the nation to undertake an Antimicrobial Copper retrofit, has replaced steel, wood and plastic touch surfaces with solid, EPA-registered copper-based metals like brass and bronze. Many high traffic surfaces were converted including: stair railings, sinks, faucets, tables, locksets, cabinet pulls and chair arms.

RMHC leaders and copper industry experts will reveal the new look at a private ribbon-cutting ceremony on Feb. 16 attended by local business and civic leaders, current and former RMHC guests, and others. RMHC is the "home-away-from-home" for families of children from across the Southeast who are being treated at the Medical University of South Carolina.

The Medical University of South Carolina measured the amount of bacteria on the previous touch surfaces prior to the copper retrofit and will compare the amount of bacteria on the new copper surfaces against their predecessors, with results scheduled for release in the third quarter of 2012.

"When we learned about copper's proven antimicrobial properties, we were anxious to be the first Ronald McDonald House to test the touch surfaces. I hope our results will help spur a public health trend toward the use of antimicrobial copper materials," said Barbara Bond – executive director, Ronald McDonald House of Charleston. "It has been an honor to work with the copper manufacturers and installers who donated time and materials in helping us to make our facility even safer for our guests and their children," she added.

Participating organizations include: Olin Brass, Rocky Mountain Hardware, Colonial Bronze, Elkay Manufacturing, Frigo Design, R&B Wagner Inc., ANDY OnCall, StairCrafters Inc., Nurture by Steelcase and the South Carolina Research Authority.

"This practical application of Antimicrobial Copper will provide a strong 'real world' example that will give the American public a clear understanding of the public health benefits of copper materials not only in a healthcare setting, but also in hotels, restaurants and other public gathering places," said Dr. Michael Schmidt, professor and vice chair of the Department of Microbiology and Immunology – MUSC, and lead investigator on the multi-site study.

Initial discussions about the project began in 2010, and the Antimicrobial Copper installations started in the third quarter of 2011. The facility remained open throughout the retrofit project, allowing RMHC to continue providing much-needed services with limited disruption.

For more information about Antimicrobial Copper, and to view a complete listing of EPA-approved public health claims, please visit http://www.antimicrobialcopper.com/us.

About Copper Development Association

The Copper Development Association is the information, education, market and technical development arm of the copper, brass and bronze industries in the USA. Learn more at copper.org, on our blog coppertalk.org or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/coppertalk.

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For more information, contact Marlena Reed, communications 21, at 404.814.1330.