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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 3, 2012

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CHINESE DRYWALL DEFENSE VERDICT

New Orleans, LA - This afternoon a jury in United States District Court in New Orleans vindicated local distributor Interior Exterior Building Supply (INEX) in litigation matters related to the distribution of Chinese drywall.

In the months following Katrina, INEX purchased Chinese drywall, some of which years later has been proven defective. Judge Eldon Fallon presides over the multi-district litigation that has resulted. After protracted litigation, the principal manufacturer, Knauf, acknowledged that its product was defective and has proposed a multi-million dollar settlement that is awaiting final Court approval.

In the interim, the case proceeded to trial against INEX, with plaintiffs hoping to prove that INEX knew or should have known that the drywall it purchased from China was defective. Today, after a week-long trial, the jury rejected plaintiffs' claims.

"We appreciate the jurors' dedication, sacrifice and attention, as well as the Judge's patience and guidance," said Rick Duplantier, lead trial counsel for INEX. "This has been a long, hard-fought battle," he added. "From the inception of this case, INEX has stood strong, insisting that the drywall manufacturers stand behind, and take responsibility for their products. "Today," he added, "the jury affirmed that INEX is a trustworthy local business. Blame for the Chinese drywall disaster rests not with local businesses or consumers, but with the foreign manufactures that sold defective products. And through the proposed settlement, consumers who were harmed by those manufacturers will be made whole – which is exactly what consumers, and INEX, demand and deserve."

INEX is owned and operated by Jim and Clay Geary. "Our father started this business over 40 years ago," explains Jim Geary. "We have worked hard, over several decades, to be honest businessmen, supplying good products at a fair price. We, like our many friends and neighbors, sustained massive damage from Katrina. And over the past seven years, we have remained committed to the Gulf South, determined to rebuild our lives and help others do the same. We thank those who have supported us through this process, and we look forward to continuing to our efforts to help homeowners, contractors and builders impacted by Chinese drywall."



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Mr. Duplantier's co-counsel for this trial were Ben Grau and Carlina Eiselen.

Richard G. Duplantier, Jr. is a senior trial lawyer engaged in a general commercial litigation practice and more specifically in products liability, construction, and all facets of professional liability, including medical, accounting, and legal malpractice defense.

Benjamin R. Grau maintains a diverse litigation and insurance coverage practice, with experience in the State and Federal Courts of Louisiana, Texas, and across the country in complex matters primarily in the areas of general commercial litigation, construction law and defect litigation, insurance coverage, business interruption, premises and product liability, onshore and offshore oil and gas casualty/blowout litigation, and admiralty/maritime litigation.

Carlina Eiselen's practice is concentrated on insurance coverage, property damage, premises liability, complex litigation, contractual liability, and personal injury defense.

About Galloway Johnson

Galloway, Johnson, Tompkins, Burr & Smith (GJTBS) is a Gulf South regional defense firm that represents local, national and international clients in dozens of industries. GJTBS has over 90 attorneys in ten cities located in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia and Missouri. For more information, go to www.gjtbs.com.