Press release
Public Health/HVAC

World's First Antimicrobial Copper Air Conditioner launched in Beijing

The new air-conditioner is breaking new ground when it comes to inactivate harmful bacteria and it also breaking record for energy-saving performance

Brussels, 21 December 2010: The world's first antimicrobial copper air conditioner has been launched in Beijing yesterday by the Chinese air conditioning giant Chigo, in association with the International Copper Association. This ground-breaking product will harness the antimicrobial properties of copper for a new application. In addition to this, it offers record-breaking energy-saving performance.

The Cu+ mark is used by Chigo to indicate that their products contain Antimicrobial Copper, the world's most effective antimicrobial touch surface material.

Consumers today are becoming more health conscious and, in a proactive response to this market trend, Chigo's new air conditioners are the world's first consumer goods to contain Antimicrobial Copper.

HVAC system components operate in warm, dark, humid environments that are ideal breeding grounds for contamination that causes odours and can inhibit system efficiency. Laboratory testing has shown that copper materials can inhibit the growth of these organisms. After 24 hours of exposure to copper surfaces, total die off was observed in several common mould species, and the commonly-used aluminium had no effect on any of the fungi.

While Chigo's new air conditioner is the very first to implement copper, it is also leading the way with energy efficiency. China's new Energy Efficiency Ratio (EER) standards are at the forefront of energy efficiency for air conditioners, and this unit boasts a rating of 8.36. Compared to other models of the same capacity with the current highest EER grade (3.6), it could save up to 56% more energy.

According to Chigo Group Vice President Dr. Zheng Zuyi, the new air conditioner is the latest in a long line of innovative products from the company, and there will be more to come: "Chigo, as a market leader, has always looked to producing the healthiest and quietest air conditioner and adopting the most energy-saving air conditioning technology. This new product will lead a positive new market trend towards healthier home appliances. We are delighted to witness the successful launch of the world's first Antimicrobial Copper air conditioner with the Cu+ mark. It is one of the achievements of our cooperation with ICA."

Mr. Li Xinghao, CEO and President of Chigo pointed to the future of this latest accomplishment: "As our global expansion continues, it is vital for Chigo to build up a high-quality, global supply chain. Chigo will continue to work with ICA and produce more products with Antimicrobial Copper. At the same time, it's also a part of Chigo's social responsibility to put forward product innovations that are low carbon and that also meet global consumers' growing health-consciousness."

This practical implementation builds on laboratory work by University of Southampton researcher Professor Bill Keevil assessing the effectiveness of copper as an antifungal surface for air-conditioning systems, and is a tremendous advance for both Antimicrobial Copper implementation, and innovation in HVAC.

Editor's Notes:

The latest published research into copper's efficacy against the spread of fungi in air conditioning systems appeared in *Letters in Applied Microbiology:*

Potential for Preventing Spread of Fungi in Air-Conditioning Systems Constructed Using Copper Instead of Aluminium
L Weaver, H T Michels, C W Keevil, Letters in Applied Microbiology

http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19943884

About The European Copper Institute
The European Copper Institute (ECI) is a joint venture between the world's leading mining companies, custom smelters and semi-fabricators (represented by the International Copper Association, Ltd) and the European copper industry. Its mission is to promote copper's benefits to modern society across Europe through its headquarters in Brussels and its network of eleven national Copper Development Associations. www.eurocopper.org

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