HONEYWELL, INC. SETTLES FTC CHARGES IT MADE UNSUBSTANTIATED
EFFICACY AND ALLERGY RELIEF CLAIMS FOR ROOM AIR PURIFIERS

Honeywell, Inc., of Minneapolis, Minnesota, has agreed to settle Federal Trade
Commission charges that the company made unsubstantiated efficiency and allergy relief
claims for its Honeywell Air Purifiers — portable, room air cleaners designed for use in
homes and offices, which contain enviracaire® True HEPA (high efficiency particulate
air) filters. Honeywell is one of the country's leading manufacturers of air purifiers.

According to the FTC, advertisements for Honeywell’s air purifiers claimed that its
products remove nearly all, or "99.97%," of the impurities from the air that people
breathe, including mold spores, dust mite allergens, bacteria and viruses. The FTC also
charged that Honeywell's claim that its air cleaners provide noticeable allergy relief was
deceptive. Indeed, according to the FTC, there is no conclusive evidence that air cleaners
are an effective method for treating allergy sufferers. The proposed agreement to settle
these charges would prohibit Honeywell from making any representation regarding the
efficacy, benefits, or performance of any air cleaning product without reliable evidence to
substantiate the claim.

According to the FTC's complaint detailing the charges, advertisements for Honeywell
Air Purifiers that appeared in national magazines and on national television contained
such statements as:

- "There are some places a wash cloth just can't clean. Even squeaky clean on the
  outside, your kids are still exposed to mold spores, dust mite allergens - even
  bacteria and viruses. They're in the air inside your home. But you can help protect
  your children with a Honeywell Air Purifier. Our exclusive enviracaire® True
  HEPA filter can remove 99.97% of these impurities. ... And while you're keeping
  their ears clean, we'll help do the same for their lungs"; (print ad)
- "While you're busy cleaning everything in sight, we could be taking care of what
  you can't see. The filter in a Honeywell Air Purifier removes nearly all impurities
  from the air." [A super "99.97%" appears on the screen and dissipates like dust.]
  "Honeywell. A home's not clean without it"; (tv ad)
- "Ideal for allergy and asthma sufferers. Exclusive Patented 360 Degree Air flow.
  Efficiently scrubs the room free of air pollutants"; (label) and
- "Honeywell air cleaners provide proven relief of allergy symptoms." (Internet ad)

The complaint alleges that, through such statements, Honeywell falsely claimed that it
possessed and relied upon a reasonable basis to substantiate its claims that:

A. The filter in a Honeywell Air Purifier removes 99.97% of mold spores,
dust mite allergens, bacteria and viruses from the air that people breathe
under household living conditions; and

B. The filter in a Honeywell Air Purifier removes nearly all, or 99.97%, of
impurities from the air that people breathe under household living
conditions.

In fact, the 99.97% figure refers to the filter’s expected efficiency in removing particles
that actually pass through the filter. While the filter’s efficiency is a factor in assessing the effectiveness of an air purifier in particulate removal, the FTC charged that this figure overstates the actual effectiveness of an air purifier in removing pollutants from the air in a user's environment. According to the FTC's complaint, the actual effectiveness of an air purifier depends on a variety of factors, including the amount of air that the air purifier processes, the nature of the pollutant, and the rate at which the pollutant is being introduced into the environment.

In addition, the FTC alleged that Honeywell did not possess a reasonable basis to substantiate its allergy relief claims. There is no guarantee that individuals suffering from allergies or other respiratory problems will derive a discernable reduction in symptoms through the use of these, or other air purifiers. According to the FTC, whether individuals will derive such relief depends on many variables, including the source and severity of their allergies, the rate at which the allergens are emitted into their homes or offices, whether the allergens tend to remain airborne, and other environmental factors.

The proposed agreement to settle the allegations would prohibit Honeywell from making certain efficacy claims about Honeywell Air Purifiers, enviracaire® True HEPA filters, or any other air cleaning product which is normally used for personal, family, or household purposes, unless at the time of making the claims it possesses and relies upon competent and reliable scientific evidence. Furthermore, claims that state or imply a level of performance under any set of conditions, such as household living conditions, must be substantiated by evidence that either relates to such conditions or that was extrapolated to such conditions by generally accepted procedures.

In addition, the proposed settlement would require Honeywell to possess and rely upon competent and reliable evidence, and when appropriate, scientific evidence, for any claim regarding the benefits, performance, or efficacy of any air cleaning product which is normally used for personal or household purposes. Finally, the proposed settlement contains a number of recordkeeping and reporting requirements designed to assist the FTC in monitoring compliance with the terms of the order.

The Commission vote to accept the proposed agreement for public comment was 4-0.

This matter was handled by the FTC's regional office in San Francisco.

A summary of the proposed consent agreement will be published in the Federal Register shortly and will be subject to public comment for 60 days, after which the Commission will decide whether to make it final. Comments should be addressed to the FTC, Office of the Secretary, 6th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20580.

NOTE: A consent agreement is for settlement purposes only and does not constitute an admission of a law violation. When the Commission issues a consent order on a final basis, it carries the force of law with respect to future actions. Each violation of such an order may result in a civil penalty of $11,000.

Copies of the complaint, proposed agreement and order, and an analysis of the agreement to assist in public comment are available from the FTC's Consumer Response Center, Room 130, 6th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20580; 202-326-3128, or by calling 202-326-3627; TTY for the hearing impaired 1-866-653-4261.

To find out the latest news as it is announced, call the FTC NewsPhone recording at 202-
326-2710. FTC news releases and other materials also are available on the Internet at the FTC's World Wide Web site at: http://www.ftc.gov (no period).

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