

SMI

SORPTIVE MINERALS INSTITUTE

October 18, 2007

To All Cat Owners:

In recent weeks we have received a number of inquiries regarding the safety of scoopable cat litter containing sodium bentonite. These inquiries come as a result of an inaccurate and misleading story that recently appeared on the Fox News Channel.

Scoopable or clumping cat litters containing sodium bentonite have been on the market for over 25 years. In that time these products have enjoyed tremendous popularity among cat owners due to their performance, convenience and safety. Most importantly, since their introduction there has been no valid scientific or practical evidence linking clay-based scoopable litter containing sodium bentonite with any significant feline or human health problems.

Sodium bentonite is an inert clay mineral. When it becomes wet with cat urine, the sodium bentonite encapsulates the urine in a clump, which can be easily removed from the litter box. This clumping feature allows for the removal of only the soiled litter. As a result, odor causing urine is removed leaving a cleaner, fresher litter box.

Over the years cat owners have asked whether their pet might experience any adverse health effects should the pet inadvertently ingest small particles of sodium bentonite while grooming after using the litter box. Specifically, will these few small particles result in a clump-like intestinal blockage? Twenty-five (25) years of experience, research and interviews with veterinarians answers this question with a resounding NO. Any small particles that may be ingested will pass through the cat's system as a result of normal peristalsis (the contracting of the intestine that eventually results in fecal material being eliminated). There is no scientific or practical evidence that these few tiny particles will lead to a blockage. (You should, however, take note if your cat is actually eating litter, whether it contains sodium bentonite or any other material. This behavior is often an indication of other health issues. We encourage you to consult with your veterinarian in that case.)

While scoopable litters containing sodium bentonite have been in use for the past 25 years, cats have actually been using clay mineral-based cat litter safely for almost 60 years. It is not an overstatement to say that the development and use of clay mineral-based cat litter is largely responsible for the emergence of cats as the most popular household pet in America. In all those years there has been no valid scientific or practical evidence linking clay mineral-based cat litter or scoopable cat litter containing sodium bentonite with any significant feline or human health problems.

The members of the Sorptive Minerals Institute (SMI) are the manufacturers and marketers of clay mineral-based cat litters. The SMI members are dedicated to producing litter products that are effective and above all, safe to use for cats, kittens and their human companions.

For a list of the SMI members, please visit the Member Companies section of this website.

Sincerely,

The Member Companies of the Sorptive Minerals Institute