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## House of metal helps keep couple healthy

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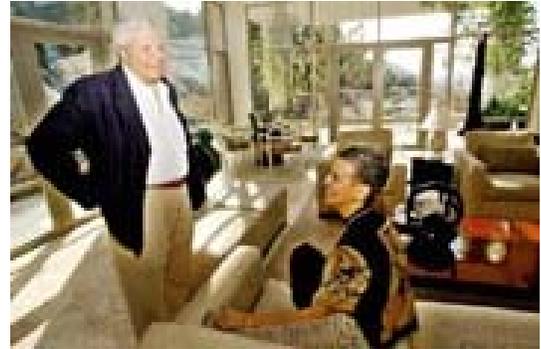
### California home built with AK Steel product

By Mike Boyer  
The Cincinnati Enquirer

If it will help people avoid illness in the future, Madeleine Landry says she doesn't mind being a guinea pig.

Of course, it helps that the experiment involving Landry includes a multimillion-dollar dream house made with 200,000 pounds of steel.

Landry and her husband, Los Angeles lawyer Ed Landry, are the proud owners of the 11,000-square-foot concept home in the Simi Valley, outside Los Angeles, featuring extensive use of AgION, the new anti-microbial coating for steel marketed by Middletown's AK Steel.



**Ed and Madeleine Landry in their anti-microbial house in Simi Valley, Calif.**  
(Associated Press photo)

The ultra-modern, open-floor-plan dwelling includes about 35,000 pounds of AgION-coated steel used in everything from the heating and air ducts, door hardware, kitchen appliances and a 6,000-bottle wine rack built by West Chester's Long-Stanton Manufacturing Co.

"It's fabulous," Landry said of the home she and her husband have been planning for several years on 130 acres with more than 2,000 oak trees.

AK began marketing stainless and carbon steel with the germ-resistant coating about 2 1/2 years ago. It's still an emerging market, representing an insignificant amount of the 6 million tons of steel it produces annually, the company says.

But with growing concern over the spread of germs and illnesses from SARS to Legionnaires' disease, the company thinks that anti-microbial-coated steel has a future.

"We believe it is a growth opportunity for us," said Alan McCoy, AK Steel spokesman. More than 20 manufacturers used AK's AgION-coated steel to craft components in the home.

The AgION coating is a long-lasting inorganic material on the steel, containing silver ions and zeolite, which suppress bacterial growth when moisture is present.

The company has invited scientists to monitor the germ-resistant performance of the anti-microbial steel in the Landrys' home.

The product is also being used in the ductwork at an Atlanta school and at a bone-marrow transplant center near Los Angeles.

Dan Cunningham, president of Long-Stanton, which fabricated the Landrys' wine rack, is exploring marketing the wine rack.



**The house has a 6,000-bottle wine rack made of AgION stainless steel.**  
photo courtesy of Long-Stanton Manufacturing

"Everybody who hears about it says, 'Oh, that's a good idea. Tell me more,' " he said.

Not only does the coated stainless steel prevent development of mold, but it also helps keep the wine cool, Landry said.

Cunningham said innovation in the steel industry is rare, so it will take time for the anti-microbial-coated steel to catch on.

Landry and her husband didn't start out planning to be part of a lab experiment, but she knows first-hand how a dwelling can affect a person's health.

She developed asthma years ago after being exposed to chemicals used to fumigate termites in her home.

She said she didn't realize what caused the asthma until about a dozen years later, when the house was being fumigated again and she read about the possible side effects.

The Landrys' old home in Northridge was slightly damaged by the 1994 California earthquake. The use of structural steel, including a stainless steel roof, for quake and wildfire protection was a no-brainer, she said.

But use of the AgION-coated steel wasn't part of the original plan.

After the home, designed by architects AC Martin Partners, won architectural awards, the Landrys were approached by AK Steel, which was looking for a concept home to demonstrate its product.

"The more we talked about it, the more it fit what we were doing," she said.

The Landrys are avid gardeners who are attempting to preserve as much of the landscape as possible, including the trees.

"We don't like to see wood cut down," she said of the decision to make extensive use of steel throughout the house.

AK Steel cautions that the AgION coating is not a substitute for regular cleaning, but Landry, who has lived in the home for three months, said the metal surfaces feel cleaner.

"I think what we're doing will be the norm in 15 years or so," she said.

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