

## PRESS RELEASE

### Rhodia takes legal action to defend its PROBAN® trademark

**Watford UK, 4th October 2005** – Rhodia Novecare has started legal proceedings claiming infringement of their PROBAN® trademark by Portwest Clothing Limited and Portwest Limited. PROBAN® is a well established textile flame retardant used for protective wear in a wide range of industries.

Court action has arisen following the importation and supply to the UK of a consignment of counterfeit clothing from the People's Republic of China. The clothing displayed a label which is almost identical to the PROBAN® label, but not issued by Rhodia. The exportation and subsequent sale of the garments infringed Rhodia's trademark.

Gerard Lenotte, Textile Market Manager explains *"PROBAN® has been established for over 50 years as a leading textile flame retardant. We are taking a strong position of defending the brand as the PROBAN® trademark represents reliable, quality fabrics - a reputation built on the strict quality control procedures licensees producing PROBAN® fabrics are obliged to have in place. Flame retardant fabrics that carry the PROBAN® trademark are guaranteed to meet fire and wash regulations. Counterfeit products undermine the brand and can put people at risk, if the fabrics do not perform as expected."*

Flame retardant fabric manufactured in China or garments manufactured from such fabric can not contain PROBAN® or bear the PROBAN® trademark. Any importation of clothing from China which is claimed to have been treated with PROBAN® or bears the PROBAN® trademark, or both, will constitute an infringement of Rhodia UK Limited's PROBAN® trademarks by the exporter and importer. Only end articles that carry a Rhodia issued PROBAN® label can be sold, marketed or referred to as PROBAN®.

PROBAN® is a flame retardant solution that provides peace of mind to both industrial and consumer markets. Developed to give cotton and cotton rich fabrics reliable flame retardant properties that meet industry fire regulations, PROBAN® fabrics properties are durable to modern day washing conditions.

*With global sales of €945M, Rhodia Novecare serves selected consumer care and industrial market segments and holds leading positions in the surfactants, phosphorus derivatives, natural polymers, synthetic polymers and monomers technologies. Growth is driven by innovation, customer intimacy and global reach. Rhodia Novecare's areas of expertise are: protection, surface modification, active delivery and improvement of formulations and processes.*

**Rhodia** is a global specialty chemicals company recognized for its strong technology positions in applications chemistry, specialty materials & services and fine chemicals. Partnering with major players in the automotive, electronics, fibers, pharmaceuticals, agrochemicals, consumer care, tires and paints & coatings markets, Rhodia offers tailor-made solutions combining original molecules and technologies to respond to customers' needs. Rhodia subscribes to the principles of Sustainable Development communicating its commitments and performance openly with stakeholders. Rhodia generated net sales of €5.3 billion in 2004 and employs 20,000 people worldwide. Rhodia is listed on the Paris and New York stock exchanges.

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