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Introduced: 1/14/85  
Referred: Health, Education and  
Social Services and  
Finance

BY KERTTULA, STURGULEWSKI,  
HALFORD, KELLY, FAIKS AND  
COGHILL

1 IN THE SENATE

2 SENATE BILL NO. 17

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 FOURTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5 A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act relating to the applicability of the scholar-  
7 ship loan program to students attending more than one  
8 postsecondary educational institution; and providing  
9 for an effective date."

10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

11 \* Section 1. AS 14.43.160(2) is amended to read:

12 (2) "full-time student" means an undergraduate or career  
13 education student who is enrolled and is in regular attendance at  
14 classes for at least 12 semester hours of credit or the equivalent  
15 during the semester or a graduate student who is enrolled and is in  
16 regular attendance at classes for at least nine semester hours of  
17 credit or the equivalent; any combination of semester hours of credit,  
18 or the equivalent, aggregating to the requisite number of semester  
19 hours and undertaken during a semester at two or more public or pri-  
20 vate institutions of higher education [OPERATING UNDER A CONSORTIUM]  
21 constitutes full-time student status;

22 \* Sec. 2. This Act takes effect immediately in accordance with AS 01.-  
23 10.070(c).



IN YOUR FILE

-A copy of HB 334

-Staff memo on HB 334

-Newspaper articles:

- 1) Asbestos Found in Infants' Lungs (AP 3/1/85)
- 2) EPA Broadens Base of Asbestos Threat
- 3) Carpenter Claims Material Unsafe

→ POSITION PAPER FROM THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

TO: House HFSS Committee

FROM: Deborah Niedermeyer, Committee Aide

RE: HB 334 forbidding hazardous asbestos in new construction

DATE: 15 April, 1985

Background

Asbestos-containing building materials are still being used in new public buildings. The purpose of this bill is to avoid the problems of asbestos by keeping hazardous asbestos materials out of public buildings or building renovations which go out to bid after the effective date.

While many asbestos-containing materials do not create dangerous fibers once installed, cutting and handling these materials during construction can create fibers which are not only hazardous to workers, but linger in the building as a hazard to the occupants after the building is completed. In some cases, the state must go to the considerable expense of removing the hazard.

This bill

- 1) Forbids the installation of hazardous asbestos in public buildings. (page 1, line 12)
- 2) Requires that both state and municipal bid specifications contain a "no hazardous asbestos" clause and requires contractors to sign a statement that this requirement has been met. (page 2, lines 5-11 and page 3 lines 7-17)
- 2) Requires the Department of Labor to inspect for hazardous asbestos at state building sites and allows the department to halt hazardous asbestos installation. Charges Labor with training state and municipal employees to do asbestos inspections. (page 1-2, lines 13-3)
- 3) Requires municipalities to make asbestos inspections of their own public building sites and allows them to halt the installation of hazardous asbestos. (page 2, lines 4-19)
- 4) Provides a definition of hazardous asbestos. (page 3 lines 19-22 and page 1 lines 21-25)

# EPA broadens base of asbestos threat

By Science Digest

Crumbling asbestos threatens many more lives than originally thought—it exists in apartments, office buildings and private homes as well as in schools and factories.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently surveyed public buildings and apartment complexes in 10 cities, according to an article in a recent issue of Science Digest, and found 20 percent, or 700,000, contained asbestos in an easily crumbled state.

The amount of that asbestos in the air remains to be determined. Until then, says Alvin Alm of the EPA, "there is no cause for alarm." But, he warns, neither is there room for complacency.

Another study funded by the Department of Health and Human Services discovered up to 200,000 California homes with air distribution ducts made of corrugated asbestos paper.

Irving Selikoff of Mount Sinai Medical Center and his colleague, William Nicholson, are investigating whether air forced through the ducts carries asbestos fibers. No one knows if similar ducts have been installed elsewhere.

Asbestos is dangerous when loose particles become airborne. They can become imbedded in the lungs and cause a sometimes fatal scarring of the lungs called asbestosis; mesothelioma, a rare cancer of the chest and abdomen; lung cancer, and other cancers.

At least one person dies from asbestos exposure every 58 minutes, according to Selikoff.

The victims include not only shipyard workers, millers, construction and utility employees and asbestos workers but also schoolchildren.

Recent studies indicate there are 15 million students and 1.4 million workers in schools that contain

loose, easily crumbled asbestos. The EPA required all schools to undergo asbestos inspection by June, 1983, and to notify parents and employees of the results. It did not mandate any further action under the theory that pressure from parents would force a cleanup.

Alm called the voluntary program highly successful.

"Two-thirds of the schools have already taken action," he said, "and another 23 percent are planning to."

Anthony Mazzocchi, of Parents Against Asbestos Hazards in Schools, called the program "a total disaster."

He claims that without proper guidelines 95 percent of the cleanups are not done properly. He said 19 asbestos-plagued schools in New Jersey did not open last fall for that reason.

Bill Borwegen, director of occu-

pational safety and health for the Service Employees International Union, agrees:

"Abatement is being done in a very shoddy manner, and schools are actually becoming more contaminated as a result."

The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is responsible for protecting asbestos workers. OSHA's mandate is not to insure a safe workplace, but only to make it as safe as economically and technically feasible.

"Basically, they are deciding how many people will live and how many will die," Selikoff says, "because there is no known safe level of asbestos."

Asbestos gradually is being replaced by other materials, including fiberglass. No one knows if those substances will prove to be dangerous.

NEWS MIRROR, MARCH 17, 85

# *League of Women Voters of Alaska*

9151 Skywood Lane  
Juneau, Alaska 99801  
April 15, 1985

Representative Koponen, Co-Chairman  
Representative Gruenberg, Co-Chairman  
House Education and Social Services Committee  
Alaska Legislature  
Pouch V  
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Re: HB 334: Installation of Asbestos in Public Buildings

Dear Representatives Koponen and Gruenberg:

We would like your committee to know that the League of Women Voters of Alaska supports enactment of the subject legislation.

Our support is based on our concern about the severe long-term health hazard posed by friable asbestos where the resulting particles can enter the circulating air in a building and become ingested into people's lungs. The League of Women Voters of the United States has adopted positions supporting protection of the public health against hazardous substances and air pollutants; and the LWVAK relies upon those positions in taking this action.

We have been following the problem of asbestos health hazards for some time, and have been supporting enactment of HB 5 (removal of asbestos health hazards from schools). It would be an ironic and costly situation, indeed, if the State of Alaska were to allow new installations of asbestos to go into State and municipal public buildings, built with public funds, when we now have a good fix on the degree of expense that will be incurred when, at some later time, much if not all of that asbestos will have to be removed in order to protect the health of persons using those buildings. While we also support energy conservation

Representatives Gruenberg and Kopenan  
April 15, 1985  
Page Two

through proper insulation of buildings and other means, other  
much safer materials and methods exist to achieve that end.

Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Cuadra, Board Member  
(Natural Resources Portfolio)

DEC:kn

cc: Committee Members (Taylor, Hurley, Thompson, Pettyjohn and  
Hanley)  
Paula Ziegler (LWVAK President)

# Carpenter claims material in Fairbanks center unsafe

FNM 11/20/85

By SUSAN FISHER  
Staff Writer

A local carpenter refusing to work on the South Fairbanks Community Center because of asbestos materials says the city is inviting future hazards, but city and state officials disagree.

The new center, which was to be completed this month, is about a month behind schedule. It will be used for a child care center and community meetings.

At issue are thin wall boards containing asbestos and silica. The tiny particles from either can be hazardous if inhaled. Asbestos is a known cancer-causing substance if exposure is prolonged.

But the Fairbanks city engineer and two state labor officials say there are no hazards to workers installing the boards providing precautions are taken. Once in place, the materials will pose no hazards to people using the building, he said.

The \$1 million center at 24th and Rickert streets is being built with state and federal funds. On Feb. 11, the Fairbanks City Council will hold a public hearing on a bill giving a 20-year lease, for one dollar a year, to the Interdenominational Ministry Alliance, which wants to operate the center.

The Rev. Lennell Cleaver, who chairs the alliance's building committee, said he personally made inquiries after hearing carpenter Ray Halderman's concerns, and he is satisfied there will be no hazards.

"The amount of particles that would escape is an amount that wouldn't hurt anything," Cleaver concludes from his conversations with various officials.

But Ray Halderman, a member of the Carpenters Union, says the city is inviting future risk in using the cement asbestos boards in the center's



**POSSIBLE DANGER**—Merv Meeker, project manager for Toombs Construction project on the South Fairbanks Community Center, points to the caution warning on a sheet of asbestos wallboard. He is in a room specially sealed off with plastic in order to cut the asbestos. (Staff photo by Charles Mason)

kitchen and bathroom areas. Halderman says he's been raising his concerns to officials the past two months, and he refuses to work at the site.

"They're seeming to say it's not a problem, but I say it's dumb putting this material in," he says, when there are cheaper and less hazardous materials available.

"The main problem is the danger of it being cut after it's installed," Halderman says.

City Engineer John Phillips disagrees. "We haven't been able to find anybody other than Mr. Halderman who sees a hazard," Phillips says.

The cement asbestos boards were (See CARPENTER, Page 3)

## CARPENTER...

(Continued from page 1)

recommended by architect Roger Cotting, and are specified in the city's contract with Toombs Construction Co.

Phillips has called a number of agencies, including the federal Environmental Protection Agency. The only hazards appear to be during cutting and installation.

"We still have an open mind about this, but no one has recommended that we not use this material," Phillips said Friday.

Meanwhile, two officials with the Alaska Department of Labor's OSHA sections say the contractor's plans for protecting workers go beyond employer requirements. They do not see hazards for building users once construction is finished and the area is thoroughly vacuumed.

Halderman, though, wonders what will happen if someone unwittingly damages, cuts or puts a hole in the boards without knowing of the asbestos fibers and silk particles.

Phillips replies: "The lease agreement for the building contains a clause there will be no additions, alterations, etc. without obtaining the city engineer's written approval in advance."

Merv Meeker, Toombs Construction project manager, says Glasweld, manufactured in Pennsylvania, is specified in the contract.

The boards, about one-eighth-inch thick, come in large sheets. Those are cut to size, and cuts are made for fixtures. Glasweld, contains 51 percent cement, 15 percent asbestos and 34 percent silica, said Meeker.

Among attractive qualities of this product are its resistance to fire, its durability, moisture resistance and easy maintenance. The boards are being installed over sheetrock at the new center.

Meeker expresses concern over the silica, and says the extra precautions, which Toombs will pay out of its own pocket, are as much due to the silica as the asbestos.

Workers will wear disposable coveralls and use respirators to avoid inhaling particles. The work areas will be covered with Visqueen, with an air chamber leading to them. Special filters will be placed on the vacuum system, Meeker said.

Toombs Construction and the city engineering office are relying on the free advice of a state OSHA consultant, Pat Patterson, who has been at the job site and made his recommendations.

Bill Blythe, an OSHA industrial hygienist, said installing this type of asbestos product is far less hazardous than, say, removal of older asbestos products, which can make it those older products that are the subject of expensive removals in schools throughout the nation and Alaska.

This board, Blythe said, is "very well bonded."

Once the building is complete, users should not be exposed to hazards. "If people working on it or cutting on it or scraping things off of it, you may generate asbestos fiber, but it's hard to imagine there would be any exposure. The hazard comes from fibers in the air. Just because it's in the building doesn't mean it's in the air," said Blythe.

# Asbestos found in infants' lungs

3/1/55

CHICAGO (AP)—Asbestos has been found in the lungs of infants less than 10 months old, suggesting that the flame-retardant mineral fiber linked with lung cancer is "probably everywhere," a researcher says.

"Nobody had ever looked at (possible asbestos exposure in) either children or infants," said Dr. Abida K. Haque, a pathologist at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston.

"I started looking at ones that had died of various diseases," Haque said in a telephone interview Wednesday. "I was surprised that in the first one I looked at, I found a few asbestos bodies."

Asbestos bodies are microscopic fragments of asbestos that become coated with iron and proteins after they lodge in the lung. Over several years, they give rise to fibrous tissue that displaces lung tissue and reduces breathing capacity.

Concentrations of asbestos bodies in some infants were comparable with those in some adult lung-cancer patients, Ha-

que and her colleagues said in a report in the March issue of the American Medical Association's Archives of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine.

"The number (of asbestos bodies) I found was really small," Haque said. "What I was concerned about was the duration of exposure—being exposed when they are small... what effect it might have when they are 20 or 30."

The study was based on 17 autopsies on infants ranging in age from 2½ months to 10 months. Ten had died from sudden infant death syndrome and seven had died from pneumonia, skin infections, meningitis and other diseases.

Haque cautioned that the Galveston study was "very preliminary" and that "at least 50 to 100 more infants will have to be studied to determine whether the findings are meaningful.

The infants might have been exposed to asbestos sprayed on ceilings, used in incubator gaskets or found in other sites in the home or hospital, Haque said. "It's probably everywhere."

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