



Facts About . . .

Maryland
Department
of the
Environment

THE ASBESTOS & INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE PROGRAM

Industrial Hygiene Division

The functions of this division were in large part created by two gubernatorial executive orders. In April of 1983, Governor Hughes signed an Executive Order establishing the Maryland Asbestos Program. The purpose of this program is to educate all State employees about the potential health hazards of asbestos containing materials and to establish an asbestos safety program that will protect both state employees and occupants of State buildings. This program provided employee training, established the Safety and Health Program, and provided medical monitoring examinations for some employees. To date, the division has trained 2,000 employees in various asbestos disciplines. Governor Schaefer signed an executive order in 1987 that created the Asbestos Oversight Committee (AOC) and the order also reaffirmed the provisions of the 1983 order.

The AOC was created to coordinate all State-related asbestos activities. The committee was charged with developing a plan to manage asbestos in the short term as well as for the long term in state facilities. The division is also responsible for overseeing asbestos projects funded by the AOC. Staff verifies that proposed projects meet AOC criteria, write specifications, and perform some contract management. The AOC also is responsible for formulating the appropriate policies to effectively address and resolve asbestos-related issues. The AOC has overseen spending of \$14,000,000.00 on asbestos abatement in state facilities since 1987.

Asbestos Accreditation and School Assistance Division

This division is responsible for technical assistance to Maryland schools that must comply with federal regulations. These regulations require schools to perform inspections for asbestos and develop a plan to manage the asbestos. The staff provides technical interpretation of the regulations, copies of documents, conducts site visits, and publishes a quarterly newsletter for the schools, asbestos contractors, consultants, and asbestos coordinators in state facilities. As part of a grant commitment, the division also conducts inspections of the schools to determine their compliance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act. The results are forwarded to Region III EPA for any enforcement activity.

The division also regulates the public and private sector asbestos training providers approved under COMAR 26.11.23. Since the regulations took effect in 1991, the training providers have trained nearly 50,000 persons in five different asbestos occupations. In FY'02, the division accredited 5457 persons. There are currently 20 companies approved to provide training. HB 206, that was passed in 1997, allowed the division to make some minor amendments to the regulations that extended coverage of these regulations to many persons performing asbestos activities in public and commercial buildings. One of these changes included regulating the foreign language training courses as separate courses with an application fee, etc..

Asbestos Licensing and Enforcement Division

This division grants approximately 200 asbestos removal contractor licenses each year. This number includes both the new applications and renewals. The applicants must provide detailed information demonstrating the applicant's knowledge of Maryland and federal requirements relative to asbestos projects. Annual fees vary from \$125 to \$750 depending upon the number of employees trained to handle asbestos. In the last state fiscal year, FY'02, the division received 2776 asbestos project notifications and conducted approximately 1100 project site inspections. In that same year about 150 Notices of Violation and compliance assistances were issued that resulted in 4 penalty actions (consent orders, corrective orders, and civil penalties). Penalty payments of \$88,000.00 were collected.