
EPA to Test Homes for Libby Asbestos in N.E. Minneapolis

N.E. Minneapolis Asbestos Site
Minneapolis, Minnesota

September 2008

Public meeting scheduled

EPA will host a public meeting on the indoor asbestos sampling assessment:

6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 16
Logan Recreation Center Gym
690 13th Ave. NE
Minneapolis

If you need special accommodations to attend this meeting, contact Don de Blasio (see below).

For more information

To learn more about the testing of indoor asbestos, contact:

Don de Blasio

Community Involvement Coordinator
312-886-4360
deblasio.don@epa.gov

Anita Boseman

On-Scene Coordinator
312-886-6941
boseman.anita@epa.gov

Call EPA Region 5 toll-free,
800-621-8431, weekdays,
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

You may review technical documents about the Western Mineral Products site in an information repository located at:

Hennepin County Library Northeast
2200 Central Ave. NE
Minneapolis

Or visit

<http://www.epa.gov/region5/sites/neminneapolis/>

For information on asbestos, visit
www.epa.gov/asbestos.

Over the next few weeks, you may see U.S. Environmental Protection Agency workers in your neighborhood. This fact sheet explains what is happening in your community.

Having cleaned up asbestos from the yards at more than 260 northeast Minneapolis homes, EPA Region 5 now wants to find out if air inside these homes contains asbestos fibers, often referred to as “Libby asbestos,” from the former Western Mineral Products/W.R. Grace plant. The plant processed vermiculite ore contaminated with asbestos from Libby, Mont. From the late 1930s until the late 1980s, the plant operated at 1720 Madison St. NE.

EPA expects to test the air inside 30-50 of the homes in Logan Park’s Holland and Sheridan neighborhoods that had an outdoor Libby asbestos cleanup. This assessment will begin on Sept. 24 and will take about two weeks to complete. The tests will show if Libby asbestos fibers are present and if they are from the Western Mineral plant.

Selection of homes

To determine if contamination was tracked indoors, EPA officials will sample a representative number of Logan Park homes that had an outdoor cleanup to see if Libby asbestos from Western Mineral is present.

EPA will select the homes to be sampled based on:

- Proximity to the Western Mineral plant.
- Outdoor Libby asbestos sampling results prior to the outdoor cleanup.

If your home was selected, you may have already received a notification letter from EPA. Your permission is needed to do the testing, so you will be asked to sign an access agreement and complete a brief survey. Participation is voluntary. (If you do not receive a letter, your home was not selected.)

Test procedures

Workers will test indoor air quality as well as dust in the homes. Testing cannot be done without permission of the owner and resident. If the owner and resident do not agree to participate, another property will be selected.

Generally, technicians will take samples of air and dust from two locations in the home, preferably from an undisturbed area as well as from an area with high foot traffic. Possible sampling locations include:

- The entrance residents use most frequently.
- The floor in the least-used entrance.
- The top of the refrigerator.
- The floor in the room where children under six often play.
- Inside the ventilation system.
- Under appliances or other areas where dust may accumulate.

Devices used to take air samples must remain in place for 12 hours.

Air and dust samples will be analyzed in a laboratory. It will take up to four months to get final results. The results will be provided to residents and owners, and the information also will be shared with EPA’s partners at the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, the Minnesota Department of Health and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

EPA hopes to learn several things from this indoor assessment:

- If Libby asbestos fibers are in indoor air.
- To what extent fibers in household dust become airborne.
- Whether data from the test homes can be applied to all homes in the area.
- Whether Libby asbestos in indoor air poses a health concern for residents.

Background

To date, EPA has inspected more than 1,600 homes in northeast Minneapolis for Libby asbestos in soil. The Agency has done several cleanup projects since September 2000 to remove Libby asbestos contamination from the soil at area homes as well as the former Western Mineral facility itself. Contaminated soil was removed and clean soil brought in.

Now we want to determine if there are significant amounts of Libby asbestos materials from the former plant inside homes. Asbestos fibers may have gotten inside by falling off clothing and work materials of Western Mineral employees; being tracked inside by persons walking in contaminated soil or driveways; and drifting inside during operation of the Western Mineral plant.



Equipment like this will be placed in selected homes to collect air samples.

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EPA to Test Homes for Libby Asbestos in N.E. Minneapolis N.E. MINNEAPOLIS ASBESTOS SITE:

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Agency
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