

Control Number: C108

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Asbestos NESHAP Clarification on What Constitutes Crumbled, Pulverized, or Reduced to Powder

FROM: John B. Rasnic, Director
Stationary Source Compliance Division

TO: James J. Burke, Chief
Toxics and Pesticides Branch
Region III (3AT30)

This memorandum is in response to your October 17, 1991 memorandum in which you requested a policy determination on when asbestos-containing materials (ACM), which are damaged during the course of demolition and renovation, become friable ACM. Specifically, you inquired at what point does damaged nonfriable ACM, such as transite siding, become regulated. As you stated in your memorandum, the word "broken" has been deleted from the definition section because it could be mistakenly interpreted as substantially increasing the scope of the standard. Most nonfriable materials can be broken without releasing significant quantities of airborne fibers. It is only when the material is extensively damaged that the potential for significant fiber release is greatly increased.

Transite siding, which is a Category II nonfriable ACM, becomes regulated ACM if it has a high probability of becoming or has become crumbled, pulverized or reduced to powder by the forces expected to act on the material in the course of the demolition and renovation operations. There is a difference between merely breaking a transite panel, and crumbling, pulverizing or reducing it to powder. If a Category II material, such as transite, is in good condition it can be broken without causing the material to become regulated. Transite panels are typically bolted or nailed to buildings on which they are attached. The extent of breakage which would normally result from carefully removing a transite panel from a building and lowering it to the ground prior to demolition would not result in crumbling, pulverizing or reducing the panel to powder.

The extent of breakage which will render the ACM friable depends to some degree on the condition of the ACM prior to the abatement operation. This is true for both Category I and II ACM. Therefore, it is difficult to make a general statement on the level of breakage which causes ACM to be regulated. A case by case determination must be made considering the condition of the material and the forces which have or will act upon it.

Under the definition of "regulated asbestos containing material" (RACM) in the asbestos NESHAP, EPA listed sanding, grinding, cutting or abrading as work practices which, when subjected to Category I ACM, would cause that material to be regulated. Similarly, we can give examples of work practices which will cause Category II ACM, such as transite, in any condition to become RACM. Any demolition operation (i.e., use of a wrecking ball; implosion; use of a bulldozer, backhoe or other heavy machinery to knock the building over) will extensively damage Category II ACM such that it is crumbled, pulverized or reduced to powder. Dropping Category II material, such as transite panels,

from a building as a means of transporting it to the ground, will also cause the ACM to be regulated in most conditions. The burning of any ACM, including Category I and II, will also cause that material to become regulated. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of work practices which will cause Category II ACM to be crumbled, pulverized or reduced to powder. It does, however, provide guidance on the type of work practices which we believe will cause Category II ACM to be subject to the asbestos NESHAP.

This determination has been coordinated with EPA's Office of Enforcement and the Emission Standards Division of the Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards. If you have any questions, please contact Scott Thrower of my staff at FTS 678-8699.

Sincerely,

John B. Rasnic, Director
Stationary Source Compliance Division
Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards

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