

FROM: DA WASHINGTON DC, DACS-SF

TO: ALARACT

IMPORTANCE: HIGH

UNCLASSIFIED//

SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (SA) SAFETY MESSAGE TO THE ARMY

SUBJECT: ASBESTOS AWARENESS

1. References:

- A. AR 200-1, Environmental Protection and Enhancement.
- B. AR 420-1, Army Facilities Management.
- C. 29 CFR 1910.1001, Occupational Safety and Health Standards, Asbestos.
- D. 40 CFR Part 61, Subpart M, National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants for Asbestos.

2. The Army recently experienced a potential Soldier exposure to asbestos while executing a self-help renovation/demolition operation conducted in a barracks. Because DOD facilities continue to contain asbestos products, Soldiers and civilians must be informed of asbestos hazards and proper handling and management requirements.

3. Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral fiber once widely used in building materials and other products, including insulation for pipes and furnaces, concrete, floor tile, siding, and brake shoes. When asbestos-containing material is disturbed or damaged, it can release microscopic asbestos fibers that, if inhaled, can create health hazards. Exposure to high levels of airborne asbestos has been associated with chronic lung disease and cancer. Per reference A, all workers in facilities where asbestos exposure may occur will be trained under Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations and asbestos safe work practices requirements. Reference A also places restrictions on self-help work involving asbestos.

4. Per reference B, garrisons are required to have asbestos hazard management plans that identify, regularly inspect the condition of, and control the removal of asbestos containing material. Before conducting facility renovation/demolition operations where asbestos is known or believed to exist, Leaders must contact their installation's Directorate of Public Works (DPW) to ensure qualified inspectors determine the condition of asbestos-containing material. The DPW is required to manage the monitoring, abatement, removal, handling, and disposal of asbestos-contaminated materials and maintain records of these actions. Asbestos-containing material will be removed and disposed of in accordance with the above references and other applicable Federal, State, and local requirements.

5. Garrison Commanders must inform their military, civilian and contractor personnel who live or work on the installation that they may not perform self-help projects where asbestos could be encountered or conduct activities that could disturb products potentially containing asbestos.

6. Familiarity and compliance with the requirements above are essential elements in keeping our Soldiers and civilians safe both on and off our installations. For more information, consult your safety and occupational health office or the US Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine.

7. This message expires 15 Dec 2010.

SA