



REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

P. O. Box 4024
4th Street Sinkor, Tubman Boulevard
1000 Monrovia, 10 Liberia



REGULATORY
INSTRUMENT

ASBESTOS REGULATION
OF LIBERIA

REGULATORY INSTRUMENT No. RI/C&E 001-04/17

REGULATORY INSTRUMENT

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AGENCY

Instrument: Asbestos Regulation of Liberia
Instrument no: RI/C&E 001-04/17
Prepared by: EPA/IESIATRC
Approved by: Management Team/Executive Director, EPA
Effective date: April 7, 2017

Regulation on the Production, Importation, Handling, Sale, Segregation, Transportation, Use, Storage, and Trade in and Disposal of Asbestos and Materials containing Asbestos in Liberia

Definitions

Asbestos:- Asbestos is the name given to a number of naturally occurring fibrous minerals with high tensile strength, the ability to be woven, and resistance to heat and most chemicals. In most developed countries, including America, Asbestos is defined as the asbestiform varieties of chrysotile (*serpentine); crocidolite (riebeckite); amosite (cummingtonite/grunerite); anthophyllite; tremolite; and actinolite. Any substance or material therefore containing 1% or more of any of the asbestiform varieties specified above is asbestos.

Asbestos fiber:-a particle of asbestos that is not less than 5 micrometers in length, and is less than 3 micrometers in width, and has a length to width ratio of not less than 3:1.

Health Effects of Exposure to Asbestos

Exposure to airborne friable asbestos may result in a potential health risk because persons breathing the air may breathe in asbestos fibers. Continual exposure to asbestos can increase the amount of fibers that remain in the lung. Fibers embedded in the lung tissue over time may cause serious lung diseases, including asbestos, lung cancer, or mesothelioma. Smoking increases the risk of developing illness from exposure to asbestos.

Fibrosis:- scarring of the lungs as a result of inhalation and retention of asbestos fibers.

Hazardous:- activity, arrangement, circumstance, event, occurrence, phenomenon, process, situation, or substance (whether arising or caused within or outside a place of work) that is an actual or potential cause or source of harm.

Mesothelioma:- the type of cancer that attacks the pleura, which is the delicate membrane that encases the lungs. It also attacks the peritoneum, a similar membrane that lines the abdominal cavity

Some Health Effects Associated with Exposure to Asbestos

- Asbestosis- a serious, progressive, long-term non-cancer disease of the lungs. It is caused by inhaling asbestos fibers that irritate lung tissues and cause the tissues to scar
- Lung Cancer- this causes the largest number of deaths related to asbestos exposure. People who work in the mining, milling, manufacturing of asbestos, and those who use asbestos and its products are more likely to develop lung cancer than the general population.
- Mesothelioma- this is rare form of cancer that is found in the thin lining (membrane) of the lung, chest, abdomen

Preamble

Whereas, Section 5 of the Act Creating the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), recognizes the EPA as the principal authority for the management of the environment in Liberia and Sections 52 and 53, Part V, of the Environment Protection and Management Law (EPML) of Liberia, places the management of pesticides, toxic and hazardous chemicals and materials under the EPA; and the determination of whether or not a substance is hazardous is the statutory mandate of the EPA; and,

Whereas, Section 4, Part II of the Environment Protection and Management Law of Liberia mandates the Environmental Protection Agency to, in collaboration line agencies, establish adequate environmental protection standards, and to monitor any changes in environmental quality; and

Whereas, Sections 37 and 38, Part IV of the Environmental Protection and Management Law, requires the Agency to, in consultation with line MACs, identify and classify materials and processes that are dangerous to human health and the environment, issue guidelines for the handling, storage, transportation,

segregation and destruction of hazardous wastes, and prescribe standards and classification for wastes and analysis and formulas and advise on standards of disposal methods and means for such wastes; and

Whereas, Section 6 of the Act Creating the Environmental Protection Agency, empowers the Agency to collect, analyze and prepare basic scientific data and other information pertaining to pollution, degradation and on environmental quality, resource use and other environmental protection and conservation matters, and initiate and co-ordinate actions required in a state of environmental emergency or any other situation which may pose serious threat to the environment and public health; and,

Whereas, it is within the National Environmental Policy of Liberia for the Agency to institute appropriate measures to control pollution and the importation and use of potentially toxic chemicals; and

Whereas, the Rotterdam Convention on International Trade in Hazardous Chemicals (Annex III) to which Liberia is a Party, lists asbestos as a severely hazardous chemical whose importation where permitted, shall require prior informed consent of the relevant authorities in accordance with provisions of Articles 5 and 6 of the Convention;

Whereas, exposure to asbestos fiber may occur when materials containing asbestos are sanded, sawn, drilled, or handled in maintenance or removal tasks because most of the larger fibers are deposited in the nose and major airways; and,

Whereas, inhalation of high concentrations of all forms of asbestos may result in asbestosis, a progressive fibrosis of lung tissue; and,

Whereas, item 16 of Annex I of the Environment Protection and Management Law of Liberia (2003), recognizes asbestos as a material of serious health hazard, particularly when inhaled, and therefore banned in Liberia due to its contribution to:

- Lung and gastrointestinal cancer
- Chronic disease characterized by fibrosis
- Mesothelioma.

NOW THEREFORE, THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, IN COLLABORATION WITH LINE MINISTRIES, AGENCIES AND COMMISSIONS ISSUE THESE REGULATIONS AS FOLLOWS:

- 1 Production of asbestos or materials containing asbestos in Liberia is banned except its production is for the security of the state.
- 2 Importation, sale and distribution of asbestos, materials containing asbestos and/or its derivatives are banned in Liberia;
- 3 The Environmental Protection Agency shall, in line with relevant MACs commence the assessment and conduct of inventory of existing asbestos materials in the country within 12 months as of the publication of this Regulation
- 4 All Asbestos products in the hands of business entities and individuals must be disposed off in an environmentally friendly manner approved by the Environmental Protection Agency and at EPA approved and/or designated site;
- 5 The EPA shall identify, locate and assess the existence of all asbestos products and materials in Liberia and conduct an inventory; and thereafter, inform and mandate anyone in possession of Asbestos and/or asbestos materials to notify and report same to the Agency for technical advise and assistance on disposal;
5. Any one removing, disposing of and destroying Asbestos and/or asbestos materials without the approval of the EPA shall be held in contravention of the Environment Protection and Management Law of Liberia and shall be fined in accordance with Section 56 of the Law;
6. All properties, including buildings,, public, private, residential or otherwise must begin removing Asbestos from their roofs in accordance with No.4 above, as the EPA shall set the time frame of phase out of Asbestos on all roofs within the Republic of Liberia
7. As of the publication of this Regulation, no building or construction, private, public, or residential, shall use asbestos or materials containing asbestos in any construction or otherwise.
8. The EPA will take measures to encourage establishment of specialized asbestos entities and registry of asbestos professionals for the purpose of safe disposal of asbestos and/or asbestos material-- all those registered must be certified by the EPA;
9. Anyone who willfully intentionally deceives or attempts to deceive the EPA by declaring Asbestos as another product shall be fined in accordance with Section 56 of the Environment Protection and Management Law of Liberia;

10. No person shall undertake work in demolition, maintenance, or any other work which exposes or is likely to cause exposure to asbestos without approval by the agency, shall be in violation of these Regulations and punishable in line with the EPML.

12. An employer shall ensure that adequate safety information, instruction and training is given to employees who are or who are likely to be exposed to asbestos, or who supervise such employees, so that they are aware of the properties of asbestos and its effects on health, including its interaction with smoking, the types of products or materials likely to contain asbestos, the operations which could result in asbestos exposure and the importance of preventive controls to minimize exposure,

13. During handling, including transportation, removal and disposal, every employer shall ensure that all employees are provided the relevant personal protective equipment and facilities, where it is required to provide protective clothing, adequate facilities for the storage of that protective clothing, and personal clothing not worn during working hours; and where it is required to provide respiratory protective equipment, adequate facilities for the storage of that equipment.

14. No person shall use asbestos and/or materials containing asbestos except in the course of activities in connection with its handling and disposal in accordance with no. 13 above.

15. These Regulations shall apply to any person, whether employee, employer, a contractor, or owner of the premises containing the asbestos and/or asbestos containing materials.

These regulations become effective as of the date of publication.

Done under our hands and signatures, this _____ day of _____ A. D. 2017 in the Port City of Buchanan, County of Grand Bassa.

Approved: _____

Madam Anyaa Vohiri
Executive Director/CEO
Environmental Protection Agency

