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asbestos
Notebook

PLAINTIFF'S
EXHIBIT

KRC-1

City firm is fined in asbestos violation

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Sun Exploration and Production Co. has been fined \$9,000 for violating the Texas Clean Air Act by failing to control asbestos emissions while demolishing its Redfish Bay plant near Ingleside.

Meanwhile, the Corpus Christi Independent School District has discovered an asbestos-wrapped pipe, about 50 feet long, at Miller High School.

The Sun violation occurred in June 1986, said Tom Palmer, director of the Texas Air Control Board regional office in Corpus Christi.

Officials of Sun Exploration and Production Co., a Corpus Christi firm, could not be reached for comment.

The school district spent more than \$100,000 removing asbestos at Ray High School in 1985 and more than \$300,000 in 1984 removing the substance from several other schools. Most recently, the district found asbestos during renovations at Miller, said Abe Saavedra, assistant superintendent of support services for CCISD.

The district, he said, is planning to remove the asbestos with a contractor certified in asbestos removal. The asbestos-wrapped pipe is located away from student exposure, Saavedra said.

Removing the asbestos at Miller should not be nearly as expensive as at Ray because there is much less surface area of asbestos, said Ray Bilyeu, who oversees maintenance for CCISD.

Exposure to high levels of asbestos fibers has been linked by the federal Environmental Protection Agency to increased incidence of lung cancer, asbestosis and other respiratory ailments. Asbestos is a mineral used as insulation for pipes and in buildings.

Federal law requires school districts to survey schools to determine how much, if any, asbestos is present in school buildings.

The CCISD completed its survey about three years ago and removed all asbestos visible to the survey team, Saavedra said.

Following those inspections, asbestos was removed from pipes and ceilings at Tom Browne and Wynn Seale junior high schools, Miller High School and Schanen Elementary School at

A Miller High School pipe, about 50 feet long, has been discovered by CCISD to be wrapped in asbestos.

a cost of \$372,881.

But, Saavedra added, as schools are remodeled or renovated, workers sometimes find asbestos-covered pipes or tiles hidden in the original inspection, as was the case at Miller.

"Very likely we will continue to discover it," he said.

If the asbestos is not disturbed, the emission level usually is too low to pose a danger to occupants of a building. But according to the EPA, if the asbestos is disturbed or broken up, the released fibers can pose a threat.

The administrative fine at Sun's Redfish Bay plant occurred, Palmer said, because the company failed to notify the state when asbestos was discovered while dismantling the plant.

"They had already stripped a lot of the asbestos out of there, and it was all over the ground," Palmer said.

Under the Texas Clean Air Act, when a building or industrial plant is demolished or more than 260 feet of asbestos pipe insulation is removed, advance notice must be filed with the TACB.

The statute also requires that only wet removal techniques be used, and that no visible emissions of asbestos fibers be allowed during removal, transportation or disposal of materials containing asbestos.

Since September, TACB inspectors have inspected 41 sites where asbestos was being removed or abated, Palmer said.

The \$9,000 fine assessed against Sun Exploration and Production Co. is the only major fine assessed this year, he said.

Palmer said he has recommended that another fine be assessed against another company for its handling of asbestos.

"That recommendation is in Austin right now," he said.