projects. Included in the objectives is to develop methods for intervention programs concentrating on smoking abatement, diet modification and reduction of alcohol use. Information and application forms can be obtained from the same address.

EPA REVISES GUIDE FOR PREVENTING ASBESTOS DISEASE:

EPA has published a revision of its guide to prevent asbestos disease among auto mechanics, who are considered at special risk because millions of asbestos fibers can be released during brake and clutch servicing.

"When you see a dust cloud during brake work, you are seeing clumps containing thousands of fibers," the guidance said. "Most of the smaller fibers will not show up with the methods commonly used for measuring asbestos levels in the air, such as the method used to determine compliance with the OSHA asbestos standard, since most asbestos fibers in brake dust are too small to be measured by these methods.

"Asbestos released into the air lingers around a garage long after a brake job is done and can be breathed in by everyone inside a garage, including customers. While lowering exposure lowers risk, there is no known level of exposure to asbestos below which health effects do not occur...

"Asbestos can be carried on work clothing, contaminating the family car and home. This can cause asbestos disease among family members. An ordinary house vacuum cleaner cannot collect these asbestos fibers, since its filter is not fine enough to trap them. In fact, an ordinary house vacuum cleaner is likely to stir these fibers up and scatter them into the air.

"Asbestos can also get on a mechanic's hands and be swallowed when eating or smoking a cigarette. This is a particularly difficult problem for mechanics, since they often get grease on their hands and asbestos fibers can stick to the grease."

Using a compressed air hose to clean drum brakes can release up to 16 million asbestos fibers per cubic meter of air around a mechanic's face, the guidance noted. Even hitting a brake drum with a hammer can release over a million asbestos fibers.

Many garages are turning to newer methods for brake cleaning, but EPA warns that they can actually contribute to the problem. One such method is the use of liquid squirt bottles or solvent sprays.

"The water or solvent under pressure scatters much of the asbestos, and when it dries the asbestos is still all over the surrounding work force," the guidance said. "Brake cleaning equipment using these same methods with a brush or squirt gun is likely to have the same problem. Measurements from one manufacturer using a liquid spray system showed that over a million fibers can be released near a mechanic's face.

"Using a specially designed low-pressure spray and properly collecting and disposing of contaminated liquid may prevent some asbestos from spreading around the garage. Some recirculating wet method equipment uses a solvent to collect brake dust into a tray. If the solvent evaporates from the tray, normal air currents easily lift the asbestos fibers back into the air."

Much can be done to prevent the exposures, the guidance notes. For example, enclosure equipment which slips easily over the brake assembly and forms a tight seal against the backing plate is now available. A compressed air system can then be used inside this type of enclosure system for good brake cleaning without exposing the brake mechanic or others. Clear plastic walls or windows allow easy visibility of the work being done.

"Brake dust is sucked into a vacuum cleaner equipped with a special filter called a HEPA (high efficiency particulate air) filter. Only this type of filter can capture the small, invisible asbestos fibers. Non-permeable glove attachments on some equipment allow a mechanic to do work inside the enclosure without getting asbestos on the hands. If glove attachments are available only as an option, this option should be selected."

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