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BUILDERS WARNED ON ASBESTOS RULES

The City's Environmental Protection Administration said yesterday that contractors at many construction sites were not obeying the new regulations requiring the containment of asbestos dust and that it would order work halted on projects that did not comply.

Speaking on the WABC-TV program "Eyewitness News Conference," Commissioner Jerome Kretchmer said his agency had the power to shut down violators of the regulations which went into effect last Monday. The new head of the agency's Air Resources Department, Robert Rickles, said later that at least one company had been ordered to a hearing in his office next Friday to determine whether it is a violator. If so, Mr. Rickles said, equipment at the construction site will be sealed.

Earlier, on the WNBC-TV program "Man In Office," Mr. Rickles said equipment of companies that violated other air pollution rules would be shut down if they did not submit a compliance schedule after receiving three or more summonses. He also announced plans to concentrate the department's 86 inspectors in specific areas for several weeks at a time, beginning Wednesday, Earth Day.

Declaring the citys' air "disgusting" and "unfit for human consumption," he called for stiffer regulations, speedier prosecution, much higher penalties—up to $10,000 a day, and better utilization of manpower.

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