



ASBESTOS INFORMATION ASSOCIATION

PRESS RELEASE

1745 Jefferson Davis Highway, Crystal Square 4, Suite 509
Arlington, Virginia 22202 • (703) 979-1150 • FAX (703) 979-1152

For Release

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

July 6, 1989

B. J. PIGG, President

(The following statement was issued today by the Asbestos Information Association/North America (AIA/NA). AIA/NA is an incorporated, non-profit organization representing firms in the United States and Canada involved in the mining and milling of asbestos ore, the sale of asbestos fiber, and the manufacture or processing of asbestos-containing products.)

The Asbestos Information Association/North America believes that the Environmental Protection Agency misconstrued the record evidence in announcing today its final rule banning manufacture of most asbestos-containing products over the next seven years. Contrary to EPA's conclusions, AIA/NA believes the extensive record before the Agency demonstrates that currently marketed asbestos-containing products are manufactured, installed and used safely.

Current asbestos products bind the asbestos fibers in locked-in or encapsulated matrices that significantly diminish fiber release. These products are manufactured and installed under the most stringent occupational standards in the world. Current products -- including asbestos cement pipe and shingles, roof coatings, gaskets and other asbestos paper products, and brake pads and linings -- as demonstrated in the EPA proceedings, when properly handled, cause minimal exposures and can be replaced only through use of more expensive substitutes, which themselves may pose health and safety risks.

AIA/NA believes the Agency record does not support the three-stage ban of these products over the next seven

years, as announced by the Agency. Such a ban of almost all asbestos use is contrary to the international scheme for controlled use of asbestos, as adopted by the International Labor Organization and the World Health Organization, and as followed by most nations.

EPA's rule contains prohibitions on manufacture of many asbestos-containing products. Manufacture of felt products, a/c sheet and v/a floor tile are banned in one year; original equipment brakes and non-industrial beater add and sheet gaskets in four years; and a/c pipe, a/c shingles, roof and non-roof coatings, certain paper products, and aftermarket brakes in seven years. Industrial uses of sheet and beater add gaskets, several other specialized products, and mining and milling are exempt from the rule.

AIA/NA welcomes the comments by Administrator Reilly that EPA's judgments as to U.S. manufacture should not be viewed by other nations, especially third world nations, as a signal that they should discontinue manufacture and use. We believe, however, that the same conclusions should have been reached with respect to domestic activities.

AIA/NA will be reviewing the lengthy rule over the next several weeks to determine whether it will file a petition seeking judicial review of EPA's decision.