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CITY OF BOSTON
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY HALL

KEVIN H. WHITE
MAYOR

Frank Tivnan, Jr.
Director of Communication

FOR RELEASE - MAY 10, 1971, p.m.'s

Mayor Kevin White today announced a ban on the use of asbestos as a spray-coat fire-proofing material, effective immediately.

Asbestos has been implicated as a primary cause of mesothelioma, or cancer of the lining of the lung and may result in other lung cancers, according to medical researchers.

"Serious health hazards, not only to those involved in applying the material, but also to the general public are involved," said Boston's Mayor. "The sprayed-on asbestos can become air-borne during application, due to poor housekeeping on the part of the contractor, or when a building where the material has been used is demolished.

"The Boston Air Pollution Control Commission held a public hearing on this problem in March," said Mayor White. "Their recommendation of an immediate ban, presented after careful consideration of testimony presented and their own research received my full support."

The ban will be included in the Boston Building Code. Currently, the Building Department is denying all applications for permits for the spray application of asbestos fibre.

"The decision to include this prohibition in the Building Code rather than as a regulation of the Air Pollution Control Commission was made, first because the Building Department could easily incorporate it into their present activities, and second, because it is the most expeditious procedure, assuring prompt protection of the public health," said the Mayor.

Mayor White explained that this is an example of the way in which environmental protection measures can sometimes be incorporated into the activities of other City departments.

"My office and the Air Pollution Control Commission will continue to develop a harmonious, integrated approach to environmental control," said Mayor White.

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