

The second theory put forth by the QAMA-McGill researchers is that there are minimal traces of tremolite in the asbestos mined today because it is avoided during mining or removed during the milling process. Kevin Browne presented these arguments to a conference held in Havana, Cuba and they are prominently displayed on the Asbestos Institute web site.(2001a) He stated:

...all [Canadian mine related] cases of mesothelioma were, "related to tremolite contamination. The main tremolite-contaminated mines are now closed...But in the past, the percentage of tremolite in the fibre could be as high as 1%, whereas the high tremolite-contaminated mines in the central Thetford area have closed, and in any case the high geological research has shown that tremolite is not uniformly mixed with the chrysotile, but occurs in separate seams which can be identified and avoided. And lastly, there is evidence that much of the tremolite is lost in the milling, so that what is delivered to the manufacturer will have an even lower content. So present and future supplies from these sources have and will have minimal tremolite.(Browne 200b)

However, when asked in 2001, Browne did not know whether or not Black Lake, the only operating mine at the time, was a central or peripheral mine.(Browne 2001) After "checking," a few days later he reported that it was a peripheral Thetford mine and therefore had low tremolite contamination.(Browne 2001) Unfortunately the Black Lake mine is not even in Thetford, it is in Black Lake.

The McGill-QAMA researchers base their argument on the absence of tremolite in current commercial asbestos on four pieces of evidence. To explain these arguments and