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ASBESTOS FLOOR TILE: THE POLISH IS OFF

(MMG) Baltimore — Reacting to an investigative feature by a Washington, DC television station, the United States Environmental Protection Agency has prepared a Guidance Document concerning the maintenance of asbestos containing floor tile.

WRC-TV, Channel 4 in Washington, in a three part series aired in late November, charged that the EPA has paid little or no attention to the hazards of stripping wax from asbestos containing floor tile.

During these reports, WRC revealed the results of tests it commissioned on asbestos floor tile in a vacant classroom provided by



Stripping and polishing asbestos containing floor tile can cause fiber release. The EPA has prepared a new guidance document outlining safe handling procedures.

the Montgomery County, Maryland School System. The station reported that it conducted three different tests depicting typical methods used by actual school janitors for stripping and buffing floor tile.

Following each test, WRC stated that the resulting fibers per cubic centimeter ranged from 0.02 to 0.08. The industry and EPA standard for clearance, following an asbestos project, is 0.01 fibers per cubic centimeter. But, despite this standard, the 0.02-0.08 levels found in WRC's tests are still under the legal "Action Level" of 0.1 f/cc set by OSHA.

Despite these results, the EPA still disputes the validity of WRC's tests and states that they were not typical of the methods used by actual school janitors. "They [WRC] mis-represented the issues," said Sean McElheny, a spokesman for the EPA. "They used a highly abrasive stripping pad, which is much stronger than those normally used, on an unwaxed, unwet tile."

McElheny did go on to state, however, that the EPA has not effectively communicated adequate handling procedures for asbestos containing floor tile, which until the recently prepared Guidance Document was limited to the following sentence in the EPA's "Purple Book" (Guidance for Controlling Asbestos-Containing Materials in Buildings), "Do not strip or braid floor tiles containing asbestos."

Floor tile, unlike insulation and many other asbestos containing building materials, is not considered to be friable because it can not be crushed, pulverized, or reduced to powder by hand pressure. For this reason, it has not

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IN WAKE OF THE QUAKE: MARCOR RESPONDS

(MMG)San Francisco-- As the citizens of Northern California, began the difficult task of repairing the damage caused by last October's devastating earthquake, asbestos became a major concern for many building owners in the Bay area.

American Airlines faced an especially sticky dilemma with its Super Bay hanger at San Francisco's International Airport, as asbestos insulation prevented structural engineers from examining four steel towers which supported the building.

In order for the towers to be examined for structural integrity, which the airline wanted done before it allowed its employees to return to work, the insulation had to be removed from the towers.

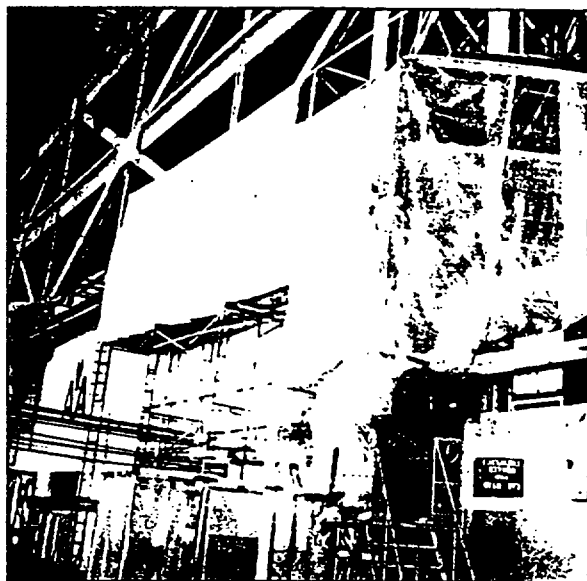
MARCOR, which has done work for American in both Los Angeles and San Francisco, responded to this emergency situation with

six crews pulled from four of the eight MARCOR operations.

The San Francisco and Los Angeles offices, whose services were already in demand due to other earthquake related emergencies, each supplied two crews, while the New York and Delmarva operations supplied one crew each.

Each operation was made responsible for one of the four towers and the entire project was directed by two MARCOR Project Managers and eight MARCOR Certified Supervisors.

Working ten consecutive 20-hour days, the MARCOR crews were able to clear all four



Six crews from four different MARCOR operations worked around the clock to remove asbestos from the four main towers of American Airlines' Super Bay Hanger at San Francisco's International Airport following the Bay area earthquake last October.

Super Bay towers, allowing the structural engineers to examine the hanger without fear of fiber release or asbestos exposure.

NEW SCAQMD RULE REQUIRES WRITTEN DEMOLITION NOTIFICATION IN CA

On January 1, the California South Coast Air Quality Management District put into effect Rule 1403 - Asbestos Emissions From Demolition/Renovation Activities.

This rule specifies work practice requirements for demolition and renovation activities and the associated disturbance of asbestos containing material (ACM). Under Rule 1403, demolition or renovation operators are required to notify the AQMD Office of Op-

erations in writing 10 days prior to any renovation work conducted on 100 square feet or more of ACM, or any type of demolition work, including buildings which *do not contain asbestos*. This rule, among other things, also governs clean-up procedures, record keeping, and training, as well as waste storage and disposal requirements.

Rule 1403, which lowers reportable notification amounts for friable and *non-friable* asbestos containing material in Califor-

nia's South Coast Region, is much more stringent than current NE-SHAP regulations.

Failure to comply with this rule, which has also eliminated all phone notifications except in defined emergency operations, may result in a penalty of up to \$25,000 per day.

Any questions concerning Rule 1403 can be posed to the SCAQMD at 818-572-6283.