

# ...Asbestos legislation

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percent asbestos by weight. The exemption suddenly opened the door for the continued sale and distribution of hundreds of asbestos products — as long as the product was 99 percent asbestos-free.

“This 1 percent exemption, which has absolutely no scientific, public health, moral, or economic rationale, would help perpetuate the worst man-made public health catastrophe in our nation’s history,” Worthington added.

A couple of bills have been introduced in the House. One mirrors the Senate version, and another incorporates language that would ban asbestos completely. But, according to Worthington, neither bill is viable.

A third bill currently is being drafted that incorporates a statutory ban of asbestos. That means, two years after the bill is passed, asbestos would be banned outright in the U.S. “This is the bill that will be considered by the committee,” Worthington said.

According to Worthington, the one percent exemption has been removed from the draft bill, and the asbestos industry is already working to derail it, just as they did in the Senate.

Since her diagnosis, Stratton’s world has been turned upside down. She had her diseased lung removed (extra-pleu-

ral pneumonectomy) by Dr. Eric Vallieres at the Swedish Cancer Institute in Seattle. She has undergone countless rounds of chemotherapy treatments. She’s dealt with infections and takes medications daily for her heart, for pain, and other side effects. She is weak most of the time and experiences chronic shortness of breath.

And she’s one of the lucky ones.

During a consultation in December, a CT scan showed that she was “cancer clear.” All of the gross tumor has been removed, and the radiation has sterilized the area.

Stratton no longer has the strength for pulling fabric off shelves, to deliver furniture, or to hoist large area rugs that she once could carry by herself. But she walks routinely and has shown an amazingly positive attitude throughout the ordeal.

Dr. Vallieres says that she will never completely get her breath back, but time will tell and significant improvement has always been a reasonable and attainable goal.

*(Editor’s Note: Seth Davidson writes on asbestos-related issues for the law office of Roger Worthington. Marilyn Stratton is the mother-in-law of Jon Gutwig, a member of Teamsters Local 305 and brother of NW Labor Press editor Michael Gutwig.)*

# Products Containing Asbestos

More than 3,000 products in use today contain asbestos. Most of these are materials used in heat and acoustic insulation, fireproofing, and roofing and flooring. Those products are being made which contain asbestos that could be inhaled are required to be labeled as such.

The following non-exhaustive list is a general guide to asbestos-containing products, arranged in the following categories.

Sample list of suspect asbestos-containing materials from the Environmental Protection Agency

Cement Pipes	Elevator Brake Shoes
Cement Wallboard	HVAC Duct Insulation
Cement Siding	Boiler Insulation
Asphalt Floor Tile	Breaching Insulation
Vinyl Floor Tile	Ductwork Flexible Fabric Connections
Vinyl Sheet Flooring	Cooling Towers
Flooring Backing	Pipe Insulation (corrugated air-cell, block, etc.)
Construction Mastics (floor tile, carpet, ceiling tile, etc.)	Heating and Electrical Ducts
Acoustical Plaster	Electrical Panel Partitions
Decorative Plaster	Electrical Cloth
Textured Paints/Coatings	Electric Wiring Insulation
Ceiling Tiles and Lay-in Panels	Chalkboards
Spray-Applied Insulation	Roofing Shingles
Blown-in Insulation	Roofing Felt
Fireproofing Materials	Base Flashing
Taping Compounds (thermal)	Thermal Paper Products
Packing Materials (for wall/floor penetrations)	Fire Doors
High Temperature Gaskets	Caulking/Putties
Laboratory Hoods/Table Tops	Adhesives
Laboratory Gloves	Wallboard
Fire Blankets	Joint Compounds
Fire Curtains	Vinyl Wall Coverings
Elevator Equipment Panels	Spackling Compounds

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