

Superfund Technical Review Workgroup (TRW) – Asbestos Committee 2024 Accomplishments

The Technical Review Workgroup (TRW) Asbestos Committee has made significant advances in the areas of training, procedures, sampling and analytical methods to improve the quality of site characterizations and risk assessments at asbestos-contaminated sites.

Technical Support

One of the fundamental roles and responsibilities of the TRW Asbestos Committee is to provide technical support for asbestos assessment at Superfund sites. This support is provided to EPA regional risk assessors as well as other federal, tribal, state, non-governmental and international groups. The TRW Asbestos Committee members are technically diverse, experienced and highly trained professionals in chemistry, toxicology, sampling, analysis and human health risk assessment in various environmental media and provide expert assistance in complex site assessment scenarios.

In 2024, the TRW Asbestos Committee consulted on five asbestos-contaminated sites in Regions 5, 6, 8 and 10.

In addition to supporting the work at specific sites, the TRW Asbestos Committee responded to five hotline (asbestoshelp@epa.gov) requests for assistance in 2024. Three requests were from EPA regional offices, one request was from an academic researcher, and one request was from a private citizen. Common issues in the requests included questions related to asbestos analytical methods, site assessment and sampling.

The TRW Asbestos Committee also reviewed and provided comments on the EPA's Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) Part 2 asbestos evaluation and the Health and Human Services (HHS)/Food and Drug Administration's (FDA's) draft proposed rule titled "Testing Methods for Detecting and Identifying Asbestos in Talc-Containing Cosmetic Products." Additionally, the TRW Asbestos Committee provided support to researchers from the University of Auckland in New Zealand in analyzing and interpreting erionite-Na results by X-ray diffraction (XRD) and scanning electron microscopy (SEM)/energy dispersive spectroscopy (EDS). Assistance with the interpretation of results of analysis of samples generated in a fluidized bed asbestos segregator (FBAS) was also provided. An erionite-K sample was also provided to the University of Auckland researchers.

Communication, Training and Outreach

In 2024, the TRW Asbestos Committee continued developing a self-guided training presentation on the updated 2021 Asbestos Framework. A recorded narration and transcript for the presentation were completed during 2024. Work on developing a case study presentation with

an accompanying transcript to be used as an additional module in the Framework training also began in 2024.

The TRW Asbestos Committee provided training and presented information at such venues as a National Association of Remedial Project Managers (NARPM) “Coffee Break” (February 2024), 16-hour Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Health and Safety course on asbestos (April and October 2024), Office of Land and Emergency Management’s (OLEM) Human Health Regional Risk Assessment Forum’s (OHHRAAF)/Ecological Risk Assessment Forum (ERAF) (June 2024), and the NARPM Conference (August 2024).

The TRW Asbestos Committee continues work on updating the National Asbestos Data Entry Sheet (NADES) tools to improve record-keeping and consistency of data use.

Research and Technical Guidance

The TRW Asbestos Committee has undertaken or sponsored several studies of asbestos analytical methods (in both air and soil) to determine which methods are most accurate. The results of these studies will help On-Scene Coordinators (OSCs) and Remedial Project Managers (RPMs) choose the best methods for their sites. A soil methods “helpful hints” technical document was finalized in March 2024.

Technical Review Workgroup Asbestos Committee Members:

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