



Report of EPA's Own Mishandling of Asbestos Highlights Hazards Workers Still Face, New York Mesothelioma Attorney Says

Report of unapproved asbestos-handling methods means government employees and contractors could have been exposed to lethal asbestos fibers, says attorney Joseph W. Belluck of New York's Belluck & Fox, LLP.

New York, NY ([PRWEB](#)) January 08, 2012 -- A recent report from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency about its own apparent mishandling of asbestos in demolition projects underscores the pervasive threat this cancer-causing material poses to Americans' health, [New York mesothelioma attorney](#) Joseph W. Belluck said today.

“If the governmental body charged with keeping us safe from environmental hazards can fail to protect its employees and contractors from asbestos exposure, it is frightening to consider the dangers faced by employees of less-conscientious organizations,” said Belluck, a partner in Belluck & Fox, a New York personal injury firm that represents victims of [asbestos exposure](#).

Belluck was referring to a December 14 memo from the [EPA's inspector general](#) that highlighted concerns about the use of unapproved demolition methods at EPA sites where asbestos was present.

Because inhaling asbestos fibers is known to cause lethal cancers such as [mesothelioma](#), demolition crews are required to follow strict protocols to prevent exposure to the deadly material, Belluck said.

The EPA report indicated that unapproved asbestos-handling methods were in use at several sites, including one in Washington state and another in Kentucky. The inspector general also cited videos and photos that showed unprotected government workers and contractors present during experiments with unapproved alternative asbestos control methods in Arkansas and Texas.

“Many of our clients developed mesothelioma or other asbestos-related diseases after being exposed to toxic asbestos at work decades ago,” Belluck said. “It is very alarming to think that workers are still facing exposure to this cancer-causing substance — even at job sites that are under the control of the government's environmental watchdog.”

Asbestos, which was once extensively used in a wide variety of applications, is the only known cause of mesothelioma. The disease is a rare but very aggressive form of cancer that usually affects the lining of the lungs. There is no known cure. Many victims do not develop mesothelioma until several decades after their exposure.

Because asbestos products remain in many older structures, the EPA has developed specific procedures for safer handling of asbestos during demolitions and renovations. The standards require specialists to remove asbestos-containing materials while minimizing the amount of asbestos dust produced.

Because the standards apparently were not followed at several EPA sites, according to the inspector general, the agency should notify workers and the public in the surrounding areas of the possibility that they were exposed to asbestos.



Belluck encouraged anyone who has developed an asbestos-related disease to seek qualified medical treatment. He also emphasized that it is important to consult with an experienced asbestos exposure attorney.

About Belluck & Fox

[Belluck & Fox, LLP](#), is a nationally recognized law firm that represents individuals with asbestos and mesothelioma claims, as well as victims of crime, motorcycle crashes, lead paint and other serious injuries. The firm provides personalized and professional representation and has won over \$400 million in compensation for clients and their families.

Partner [Joseph W. Belluck](#) is AV-rated by Martindale-Hubbell and is listed in Best Lawyers in America, New York Magazine's "Best Lawyers in the New York Area" and in Super Lawyers. Mr. Belluck has won numerous cases involving injuries from asbestos, defective medical products, tobacco and lead paint, including a recent asbestos case that settled for more than \$12 million.

Partner [Jordan Fox](#) is a well-known asbestos and mesothelioma attorney who has been named to the Best Lawyers in America, New York Magazine's "Best Lawyers in the New York Area" and to Super Lawyers. On two separate occasions his verdicts were featured as the National Law Journal's Largest Verdict of the Year. He recently secured verdicts of \$32 million and more than \$19 million on behalf of individuals who had contracted mesothelioma from asbestos exposure.

In September, Belluck & Fox, LLP, won a coveted spot on a list of America's best law firms, which was published jointly by U.S. News & World Report and Best Lawyers magazine. The listing showcased 8,782 different law firms ranked in one or more of 81 major practice areas.

For more information, contact the firm at (877) 637-6843 or through the [online contact form](#).

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