



South Coast Air Quality Management District

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NEWS

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SCAQMD Enforces Asbestos Regulations at Apartment Building, Middle School and Commercial Complex

The South Coast Air Quality Management District has recently taken enforcement action to protect the public from exposure to asbestos at three locations in Los Angeles County.

“During demolition and renovation activities, if asbestos materials are not properly handled, asbestos fibers can become airborne and pose a significant threat to public health and safety,” said Wayne Nastro, SCAQMD’s executive officer. “SCAQMD acted swiftly and decisively in these three cases to require the responsible parties to comply with our asbestos regulations.”

Based on three separate investigations, SCAQMD issued asbestos-related Notices of Violation last week at the following locations:

- *An apartment building located at 1810 Prosser Ave. in the West Los Angeles area.* The Notice of Violation was issued to the Santa Monica-based owner and operator of the residential apartments, The Roberts Cos., alleging 17 counts of violating asbestos regulations on June 13. As a result of SCAQMD’s investigation, Los Angeles County authorities temporarily evacuated residents from the apartment building due to concerns about asbestos exposure.
- *Benton Middle School at 15709 Olive Branch Dr. in La Mirada.* Notices of Violation were issued to the contractor and program manager – Access Pacific Inc. of Pasadena and Cumming of Los Angeles, respectively – and to the Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District, which owns and operates the site. The notices each alleged 18 counts of violating asbestos regulations for renovation and demolition activities that began at the school on May 22.
- *Commercial buildings located at 2322/2350/2370 South Garey Ave. in Pomona.* The Notice of Violation was issued to Grand Sequoia Global Holding Corp., the Altadena-based owner of multiple buildings in the commercial complex. After inspectors were denied entry to the site, a Los Angeles County Superior Court judge issued an inspection warrant for the premises. During the inspection that

followed, SCAQMD staff identified improper removal of asbestos-containing materials and other activities that formed the basis for the 27-count notice.

The violations alleged to have occurred at these three locations included, but were not limited to, the failure to notify SCAQMD prior to conducting demolition or renovation; the failure to properly handle, remove, and dispose of asbestos; and the failure to use properly trained and/or certified workers in asbestos-related activities.

SCAQMD's investigations into the asbestos violations are ongoing. In all three cases, SCAQMD was first alerted to the violations by complaints.

"This is a prime example of the effectiveness of our inspectors responding to air quality complaints," Nastri said. "We encourage residents to call 1-800-CUT-SMOG whenever they suspect an air quality violation so that we can investigate promptly and help ensure that public health is protected."

Asbestos is a toxic air contaminant. Exposure to asbestos fibers may cause respiratory diseases such as lung cancer, asbestosis, and mesothelioma. Asbestos may be present in a wide range of materials in residential, commercial, and industrial buildings. However, these materials generally are of concern only if they are disturbed and not properly handled.

SCAQMD's [Rule 1403](#) has strict requirements to protect public health by minimizing asbestos emissions from building demolition and renovation activities. For more information, see the SCAQMD web page on asbestos at <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/rules-compliance/compliance/asbestos-demolition-removal>.

The SCAQMD is the air pollution control agency for Orange County and major portions of Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Riverside counties.