

Phase-out Dates for Asbestos in Brake Pads Has Been Advanced (2017.5)

Asbestos had been classified as Group 1: Carcinogenic to humans by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC). To reduce the risk of exposure, the EPA pointed out that it will soon begin planning for an early ban on the use of asbestos in vehicle brake pads on 24 June, 2016. The regulation of asbestos prohibition for the manufacture of brake pads has been announced on 10 May, 2017.

As early as May 1989, the EPA announced asbestos as Category 2 toxic chemical substance in accordance with the *Toxic Substances Control Act*. Over the years, the use of asbestos had been restricted, and a timetable for a complete phase-out on asbestos has been formulated. The EPA is already enforcing the bans on the production, importation, or sale of crocidolite and amosite; asbestos in new drinking water piping and peripheral components; and the manufacturing of asbestos panels, asbestos piping, fiber cement board containing asbestos, asbestos waterproof adhesives, asbestos-containing heat insulation materials, calcium silicate boards, asbestos ropes, asbestos paddings, asbestos shingles, etc.

There was a blanket ban on the use of asbestos except for use in brake pads which was originally scheduled to be banned from 1 July, 2018. However, given the risk to public health from exposure to asbestos the EPA is considering an earlier ban on asbestos in brake pads. The EPA will follow the regulation amendment procedures to revise the asbestos control regulations, and it has been announced on 10 May, 2017. The schedule of ban on asbestos for the manufacture of brake pads has been advanced by 6 month.

There has been some concern among the public about asbestos in construction materials, and the EPA would like to remind anyone who has asbestos materials in need of removal should hire a licensed construction or demolition firm to do the job so as to prevent the inhalation of fugitive toxic asbestos dust. According to the Ministry of the Interior's *Regulations Governing Building Demolition*, demolition firms must adopt the dust control measures laid out in the regulations and follow the regulations concerning protective gear for workers, pre-demolition inspection, asbestos removal best practices, and waste disposal.

Since a ban on asbestos in new drinking water pipes came into effect as early as 1 May 1989, all drinking water operators have complied with the regulations. The EPA is confident that none of Taiwan's drinking water pipes contain asbestos.