

Day of Mourning
April 28, 2016

TALKING POINTS

- This year, the Canadian unions are calling for a comprehensive national ban on asbestos. We want the federal government to pass legislation that outlaws the use, exportation, and import of asbestos.
- Asbestos is the number one cause of occupational death in Canada. More than 2,000 people die every year from diseases caused by exposure to asbestos—mesothelioma, lung cancer, and asbestosis. Death from mesothelioma increased 60 percent between 2000 and 2012.
- Despite this, imports of items that contain asbestos, like brake pads and cement pipes, are on the rise, increasing the risk of exposure to a known killer. In 2014, imports of asbestos brake linings and pads hit a seven-year high, valued at \$3.6 million that year alone.
- There are safe alternatives to asbestos. Asbestos-free brake pads are already manufactured in Guelph, Ontario. This means that substituting for safe alternatives will create Canadian jobs and support Canadian industries.
- Plans for new spending on infrastructure at all levels of government make it urgent to put a ban in place now to guarantee those projects are asbestos free.
- We think the government is ready to listen to Canadians who want to make all of our workplaces, homes and public spaces safer and healthier by banning asbestos right now.

Glossary:

Mesothelioma: mez-oh-thee-lee-oh-ma

A rare form of cancer that develops from cells of the protective lining that covers the internal organs of the body. Signs and symptoms include shortness of breath due to fluid between the lung and the chest wall, chest wall pain and constitutional signs such as unexplained weight loss. Mesothelioma is most commonly caused by exposure to asbestos.

Asbestosis: az-bess-toe-sis

A chronic inflammatory and scarring disease affecting the tissue of the lungs. People with the condition may experience severe shortness of breath and are at an increased risk for certain cancers, including lung cancer. Asbestosis specifically refers to fibrosis within the lung tissue from asbestos, and not scarring around the outside of the lungs. It is caused by the breathing in and retention of asbestos fibers.

Source: wikipedia.com and merriam-webster.com