



Proposed Transfer of Ohio Department of Health's Asbestos Program to Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

Dear Stakeholders:

In the Ohio Department of Health's budget submission for the SFY 2018-2019 biennium, ODH is proposing to transfer its asbestos program to the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency to streamline the asbestos abatement project notification and inspection process, effective next January 1, 2018. Consolidating asbestos regulatory oversight with Ohio EPA is consistent with the agency's goal to "protect the environment and public health by ensuring compliance with environmental laws." The work of the ODH asbestos program staff is critically important to the environmental health of Ohio residents, and it will continue to be equally important under the auspices of the Ohio EPA.

The regulatory framework for asbestos in Ohio can be burdensome and duplicative. Both ODH and Ohio EPA have oversight responsibilities for asbestos abatement workers and projects. ODH's asbestos program is the only licensing and certifying authority for companies and individuals involved in asbestos abatement work. However, both ODH and Ohio EPA must be notified in advance of asbestos abatement projects which are then inspected by both programs. This is a clear overlap in the asbestos regulatory framework and by transferring ODH's asbestos program to Ohio EPA, it will reduce confusion and duplication to licensees.

While ODH and Ohio EPA will lay the groundwork for the proposed transfer of the asbestos program, it will not actually happen until the Ohio General Assembly authorizes it in a final SFY 2018-2019 state budget. If approved, the earliest that the transfer of the ODH asbestos program to Ohio EPA would occur is next January 2018. ODH and Ohio EPA are committed to keeping asbestos program employees and their unions updated on the progress of this proposal throughout the legislative process. This ensures decades of institutional knowledge will not be lost and the stakeholders will have a smooth regulatory transition that will result in less duplication and confusion.

Please contact Greg Vergamini at (614) 644-2782 for questions regarding this budget proposal.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Craig W. Butler".

Director Craig Butler
Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Hodges".

Director Richard Hodges
Ohio Department of Health