



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS

NEWS RELEASE

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Statement From International Association of Fire Fighters General President Edward Kelly in Response to EPA Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Asbestos

“The International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) applauds the Biden administration for taking necessary steps to reduce the amount of asbestos in our environment. While admirable and well-intentioned, the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) plan to ban the importation and use of Chrysotile Asbestos simply does not go far enough in protecting fire fighters from asbestos exposures, which causes diseases including mesothelioma, lung cancer, and asbestosis.

“Fire fighters are routinely exposed to asbestos that becomes airborne when disturbed or damaged by fire, and when doing their jobs fighting fires. A groundbreaking 2013 NIOSH study found that fire fighters are twice as likely to develop mesothelioma and other asbestos-related diseases than the general public.

“Banning one form of asbestos will not do enough to protect fire fighters from this known deadly hazard. Our biggest exposure is from legacy asbestos, something the EPA has continued to ignore. On behalf of our union’s more than 326,000 professional fire fighters and emergency medical personnel, I urge the EPA to join with all public safety stakeholders in taking the necessary next steps to rid our communities of this toxic substance.”