



CARD NEWS

Center for Asbestos Related Disease

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**THANK YOU
Senator Baucus
&
Senator Tester
for your
unwavering
commitment
to secure the
Public Health
Emergency
to open doors
for long-term
healthcare
solutions!**

Understanding the Healthcare Implications of the Public Health Emergency

On June 17, 2009 a Public Health Emergency (PHE) was declared in Libby, Montana. Many of you may be wondering what this actually means. Here are the answers to some of the most common questions.

What actually is PHE declaration?
It is a designation that recognizes the serious impacts on public health that resulted from the Libby asbestos exposure. This designation is a status that emphasizes the need for further action on all fronts including healthcare. It does not have funding dollars attached to it, but it is a status that opens doors for additional resources to address the community's needs related to the asbestos exposure.

Who made the PHE declaration?
During her Senate confirmation hearing, EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson committed to Senator Baucus, Tester, and the public-at-large that she would review the situation in Libby. Following her review, she determined that a significant threat to public health existed under Superfund law officially called CERCLA.

Is something different now, compared to 10 years ago when the asbestos exposure was officially recognized? No, nothing has changed or gotten worse. The declaration of the PHE was considered in 2002 but the Administration at that time blocked it from happening. Senator Baucus

continued to push the issue for the next 7 years and gained support from Senator Tester when he was elected to the Senate. Lisa Jackson stated in her press release, "This is a tragic public health situation that has not received the recognition it deserves by the Federal Government for far too long. We're making a long-delayed commitment to the people of Libby and Troy." This is the first time EPA has issued a PHE determination under the Superfund law in its history.

Does this designation mean anything for healthcare?

The determination recognizes the serious health impacts and emphasizes the need for healthcare for residents. Senators Baucus and Tester, EPA, and the Department of Health and Human Services have come together to provide a two year grant to Lincoln County for asbestos screening and treatment for asbestos related diseases from the Libby exposure. See the inside article on *asbestos healthcare funding* for more info.

What does this mean for clean-up and economic revitalization activities in Libby and Troy; and what about other vermiculite sites and homes containing vermiculite insulation? Since CARD is a healthcare organization, we have focused on the health related implications of the PHE. For answers on all of these other related topics you can visit the EPA website about the PHE at www.epa.gov/libby/phe.html or contact the Libby EPA Information

Mark Smith, Respiratory Therapist

My name is Mark Smith and I joined the CARD team on May 11, 2009. I have been in the field of respiratory therapy for 24 years. During that time I worked in hospitals for 10 years and homecare for 14 years. I am thankful for this opportunity to learn more about pulmonary function testing.

It is an honor to be part of the CARD staff and its mission to help people who have been exposed to Libby Amphibole Asbestos. I have been impressed by the character of those people who have come to my pulmonary function lab. It takes courage to come forth and deal with the fact that one has been exposed to asbestos and I realize that the breathing tests are not easy for many of you. There is no cure for the diseases that may result from asbestos exposure, but there are actions

that you can take to manage your symptoms that will have a positive affect on the quality of your life. We all have limitations of one type or another. In these situations we need to ask ourselves: What can I do to make things better?

I will focus on one thing we can do to make a difference; that being, to make an effort to be as physically active as possible. The resulting emotional and physical benefits are well within our reach. The following is a user friendly approach from the American Thoracic Society. *(Before starting an exercise program, please consult your doctor.)*

One of the most important exercises for someone with lung problems is walking regularly. Begin walking slowly at a very comfortable pace for a period of time (say 5 to 10 minutes daily or even less if necessary), 3 to 5 days a week. Take rest stops as needed. Do not increase the time you

are walking until you can walk the entire time without stopping. When you can walk without stopping to rest, increase the time you are walking by 1 to 2 minutes each week, increase your walking to 7 minutes each day. Many people with severe lung disease can reach the goal of walking 30 minutes without stopping. Some people with lung problems require oxygen during exercise. If you have been prescribed oxygen for regular use, be sure to use it with exercise. If you aren't sure about using oxygen, talk to your healthcare provider.

Your visits to CARD for screening and healthcare services also help us learn more about asbestos related disease and the management of its symptoms. Thank you for the part you play in this process. I am looking forward to meeting many more of you. If you have any questions regarding an exercise program you may contact Mark at CARD, 293-9274 extension 31.

The Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization Thanks Libby

On behalf of the Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization (ADAO), we would like to thank the Center of Asbestos Related Disease Clinic (CARD) Board and Staff for hosting the community picnic on July 11, 2009. We enjoyed the delicious BBQ and potluck, warm hospitality, and great conversations that confirmed a reassuring message for all victims that resonated hope, importance of community, and the excellent care given by CARD. We have posted some of our Libby photos online at www.asbestosdiseaseawareness.org/cure/CARD/CARD.html.

The CARD spirit and commitment to ban asbestos, fund new treatments, and research for a cure was clearly heard and felt. You have touched our ADAO family and we are pleased to announce that we will launch a campaign to raise \$10,500 to purchase your third Thermo Ultra Zero Freezer for your CARD clinic. During our tour, Dr. Black, Kimberly and Tanis mentioned you have reached full capacity with your two other freezers used for tissue specimen storage and ADAO believes your research efforts not only benefit Libby, but the United States. Check back at www.adao.us for our official launch.

You are ALL warmly invited to attend our Annual International Asbestos Awareness Day Conference held April 9 - 11, 2010 in Chicago, Illinois where the CARD Clinic will be receiving the ADAO Tribute of Unity award. Your CARD Clinic is recognized as a center of excellence in screening, surveillance, treatment, research and psychosocial programs for asbestos-related disease. You have narrowed the bridge of despair and united patients and medical communities around the world. The theme for this conference will be "Science and Technology Proves Asbestos is a Carcinogen". Our ADAO Conferences are video taped and we invite you to view the past three years at www.adaotv.com and past Asbestos Awareness Day Conference programs and tributes can be found at: www.asbestosdiseaseawareness.org/patients_supporters/tribute.html.

ADAO is grateful to have met many of you and know our common goals will one day be a reality to all. Together, change is possible. For ADAO it is not good-bye; but rather, we will see our growing friendship circle again soon in the majestic town of Libby.

With Gratitude and Respect- Linda Reinstein ADAO Co-Founder and Executive Director & Margy Johnson Urnberg, ADAO National Representative Director and former resident of Libby

Latest Developments in Asbestos Healthcare Funding

The patchwork quilt of asbestos healthcare funding is complex, but it continues to expand, one patch at a time. Each pot of money for asbestos healthcare funding has to be kept separate and has its own specific rules regarding what benefits are covered and what order bills can be submitted and paid between all of the different insurances and programs. There are two major developments in the past few months.

Two Million From the State of Montana

Jerry Bennett introduced a bill for asbestos healthcare funding in the 2009 Montana State Legislature. The bill made it through the legislative process resulting in two million dollars to continue LAMP (Libby Asbestos Medical Plan) and ARD NET (Asbestos Related Disease Network) for another two years. One million dollars for fiscal year 2009-2010, and one million dollars for fiscal year 2010-2011. Remember that the ARD NET program provides case management and home assistance services. They can be reached at 406-293-4600. LAMP provides an asbestos health screening benefit, as well as provides benefits to cover asbestos healthcare services that are not covered, or denied, by another specialized asbestos healthcare program like the Grace Libby Medical Program. LAMP can be reached at 877-889-8405.

Six Million From the Federal Government

Thanks to the dedicated efforts of

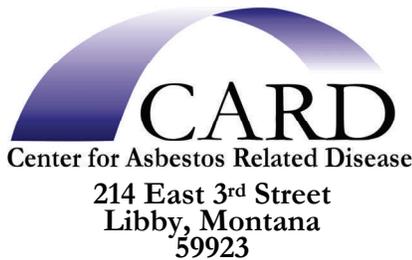
Senator Baucus and Tester, and the Public Health Emergency declaration made by the EPA Administrator, Lisa Jackson, the Federal Department of Health and Human Services has offered a sole-source (not competitive) grant opportunity to Lincoln County. This grant is through HRSA (Health Resources Service Administration) and more specifically ORHP (Office of Rural Health Policy). This project, *Targeted Rural Health Care Outreach Services for Vermiculite Asbestos-Related Diseases Program*, involves six million dollars to be used over a two year time period. Two million dollars of this funding comes from the CDC (Center for Disease Control) specifically for asbestos screening and surveillance activities. The other four million dollars comes from HRSA and is specifically for asbestos related healthcare services.

The Lincoln County Board of Health is working with a consortium of local healthcare providers to determine how best to implement the asbestos screening and healthcare benefits program to benefit those affected by the Libby asbestos exposure. The healthcare entities involved include the Lincoln County Health Department, the Center for Asbestos Related Disease, St. John's Lutheran Hospital, the Lincoln County Community Health Center, and Libby Clinic. Lincoln County plans to 1) contract a project coordinator to facilitate implementation and manage the project, 2) subcontract with CARD to provide asbestos screening and surveillance, and 3) subcontract with the Asbestos Related Health Care Project to implement the asbestos healthcare

benefits program. This group has the necessary experience because they set up, and oversee, the LAMP program. The HRSA asbestos healthcare benefits plan will be similar to LAMP in the extent that it can be billed by any type of asbestos healthcare service provider including hospitals, pharmacies, doctor's offices, etc.

It is also important to understand that the Federal Government has specific rules and procedures attached to this funding regarding how the money can be spent. Therefore, the County is working with the Federal Government to define the specific details on topics such as eligibility requirements, what asbestos healthcare services will be covered, and what order healthcare bills will be paid by all of the different programs and possible insurances. There are many details to still work out and lots of procedures to set up but you should also know that everyone is working as quickly as possible to make this accessible to the people. So, my best guess is that these benefits will become available sometime this fall. The fall edition of CARD NEWS will have the latest information on how to access these asbestos healthcare benefits.

It is very exciting that we have secured funding for the next 2 years for asbestos screening and healthcare! This may be a bridge until a long-term solution is found, but currently it is still just another patch in the quilt. We need to continue to have a loud and united voice saying we still need a long-term funding solution for asbestos screening and healthcare.



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THE BIG CARD NEWS of Summer 2009

CARD is Growing!



Due to the tireless efforts of our Montana Federal Delegation, CARD was given a federal appropriation of \$188,100 for expanding the clinic. Currently, CARD is unable to accomplish all of their proposed research activities because of the shortage of space. However, the 3,072 square foot addition to CARD's existing facility will not only mean more space for important research, but also a more comfortable and accessible environment for patients. We will be adding four new patient rooms, another Pulmonary Function Testing (PFT) Lab, a space for six-minute walk breathing tests, and dedicated space for research activities.

There is a hitch, though... In order to finish the project, CARD needs to raise an additional \$100,000. The CARD Foundation is a new, independent 501(c)3 committed to "*Supporting the Growth of CARD*" and they are kicking off a Capital Campaign to raise the necessary funds to complete the expansion project. If you want to give a donation or know someone else who might be interested, pledge forms are available at CARD or online at: www.libbyasbestos.org.

In addition, on Saturday, August 15th, between 9am and 3pm, the CARD Foundation will be selling water and soda at the "Ignite the Nites" car show on Mineral Ave., in front of First National Bank of Montana. As people enjoy a cold beverage, CARD Board members will be giving out information about the expansion project, plus they will be raffling off two gift baskets. If you are unable to make it to the event but would like to purchase raffle tickets, or if you have any other questions regarding this exciting project, please contact Betty Jo Wood, Development Officer at 406-293-9274 ext. 32 or at bwood@libbyasbestos.org.