Timeline of Asbestos Regulatory and Legislative Activities

1900 Asbestos was recognized as a cause of the occupational disease (asbestosis) in Charing Cross Hospital, London. A presumptive connection is established.
1918 Insurance companies, including Prudential, refuse to sell insurance to asbestos workers.
1922 U.S. Navy lists asbestos work as hazardous and recommends the use of respirators.
1924 Asbestos is established as a definitive cause of death from lung scarring.
1927 The name “asbestosis” is applied to lung scarring caused by asbestos. Massachusetts awards disability payments to individuals affected by occupational lung disease. Over the next 40 years, other states come to recognize asbestosis as a compensable disease.
1929 Workers begin suing Johns Manville for damages from disability caused by asbestos exposure.
1931 In the UK, Parliament requires dust control measures in asbestos textile factories and allows workers to receive compensation for asbestosis. “Safe” level is established as conditions such that no more than one in three workers will get asbestosis after 15-19 years work exposure.
1946 The American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH) establishes a maximum acceptable concentration (MAC) in 1946 of 5 million particles per cubic foot (mppcf) for occupational exposure.
1948 The 5 mppcf MAC was changed to a threshold limit value (TLV) of an average concentration over an 8-hour day, referred to as an 8-hour, time-weighted average.
1955 Richard Doll publishes paper linking asbestos to lung cancer.
1960 Chris Wagner publishes paper linking asbestos to mesothelioma.
1964 Johns Manville first places warning labels on some asbestos products. Irving J. Selikoff describes the incidence of asbestos-related

disease among insulation workers.
1969 First product-liability lawsuit is brought against asbestos manufacturers. Federal contracts over $10,000 must adhere to a workplace standard of 12 fibers per cubic centimeter of air (f/cc).
1970 OSHA establishes the first federal guidelines for workplace asbestos exposure. These take effect the following year.
1971 OSHA regulations take effect. EPA lists asbestos as a hazardous air pollutant.
1972 ACGIH lists asbestos as a human carcinogen. First permanent asbestos regulations instituted by OSHA. Permissible exposure limit (PEL) is 5 f/cc.
1973 First NESHAP rule enacted. Eliminates spray application of fireproofing containing asbestos. Asbestos consumption in U.S. hits all-time high of over 800,000 tons.
1975 NESHAP revision bans the use of asbestos in many thermal insulation products. EPA defines “friable” asbestos.
1976 OSHA PEL reduced to 2 f/cc.
1977 CPSC issues rules prohibiting the sale of consumer patching compounds and fireplace emberizing agents containing respirable free form asbestos
1978 NESHAP revision.
1979 EPA begins providing technical assistance to help schools identify and control friable ACM. The primary documents are the “orange books.”
1982 EPA promulgates “Asbestos in Schools” rule.
1983 EPA “orange book” is revised to provide guidance to manage friable asbestos in non-school buildings. The new document is the “blue book.”
1984 EPA national survey estimates that there are 733,000 buildings with friable ACM. Asbestos School Hazard Abatement Act passed.
1985 The last comprehensive EPA guidance document for asbestos in buildings is issued. This is Guidance for Controlling Asbestos-Containing Materials in Buildings, also known as the “purple book.”
1986 OSHA reduces PEL to .2 f/cc, with an “excursion limit” of 1 f/cc for up to 30 minutes. Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) is passed.
1986 CPSC issues an enforcement policy under the Federal Hazardous Substances Act (FHSA) concerning labeling of certain asbestos-containing household products
1987 EPA issues AHERA regulations. EPA promulgates Asbestos Worker

Protection Rule, applying OSHA standards to employees of state and local governments.
1989 EPA promulgates Asbestos Ban and Phase-Out Rule.
1990 NESHAP revision. Asbestos School Hazard Abatement Reauthorization Act passed. EPA holds policy dialogue with stakeholders regarding asbestos in public and commercial buildings. The “green book” is issued, a guidance document on operations and maintenance programs for the management of in-place ACM.
1991 Much of the Ban and Phase-Out Rule is vacated by the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. The portion prohibiting new uses for asbestos remains intact. Health Effects Institute compiles Asbestos Research on Asbestos in Public and Commercial Buildings, a review and synthesis of the literature.
1991 EU bans amphibole asbestos. Chrysotile is banned for some applications. Chief Justice Rehnquist of the U.S. Supreme Court appoints an ad hoc committee regarding the thousands of court-filed asbestos illness claims.
1992 EPA attempts to work with auto industry to voluntarily phase out asbestos in brakes. Threatened anti-trust action by asbestos industry ends this effort.
1994 OSHA PEL reduced to .1 f/cc. Under this OSHA standard, Thermal System Insulation (TSI) and surfacing materials installed before 1981, and floor tile installed through 1981, are presumed to be asbestos-containing unless demonstrated otherwise through sampling.
1999 EU extends ban on chrysotile to nearly all applications. Member states must enact bans by 2005.
2000 Asbestos Worker Protection Rule revised.
2002 Ban Asbestos in America Act is introduced by Senator Patty Murray.