

# News Release



## EL DORADO COUNTY



**Board of  
Supervisors/  
Air Quality  
Management  
District  
Board of  
Directors**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## EL DORADO COUNTY REACTION TO DTSC STUDY OF SERPENTINE ROADS IN GARDEN VALLEY

On Friday, April 8, the State's Department of Toxic Substances Control released its findings of "A Study of Airborne Asbestos from a Serpentine Road in Garden Valley, California." This is the first of three reports related to the presence of naturally occurring asbestos in El Dorado County that will be released this month by various state and federal agencies.

DTSC studied airborne asbestos along Slodusty Road, a privately maintained road, based on measurements taken by DTSC in 2000. After the measurements were taken, Slodusty Road was seal coated, along with road segments adjacent to Golden Sierra High School.

El Dorado County officials believe that the report is fair and accurate, and we thank DTSC officials for preparing a thorough report using a reasonable scientific approach.

### **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

While the study was conducted in El Dorado County, its findings and recommendations are applicable to most California counties. Naturally occurring asbestos is found in at least 44 of California's 58 counties.

The findings of the study are as follows:

- Roads surfaced with serpentine aggregate that are not seal coated are a likely source of airborne asbestos and pose a significant risk to public health.
- The level of airborne asbestos decreased with distance from these uncoated roads.
- Airborne asbestos was detected at greater distances than visible dust.
- When serpentine-surfaced roads were coated with chip seal, the level of airborne asbestos was reduced by 98%.

The recommendations from the study include the following:

- Chip seal serpentine aggregate roads and driveways to reduce emissions.
- Until uncoated roads can be chip sealed, motorists should drive slowly (no more than 10 miles per hour) to minimize dust generation.

### **HUMAN HEALTH RISK ASSESSMENT**

Marcella McTaggart, El Dorado County's Air Pollution Control Officer (APCO), notes that, "A risk assessment is not intended to define actual risks to any specific individual. It is purposefully designed to represent a "worst case" estimate based on many conservative assumptions. The actual risk may, in fact, be zero."

### **PAST AND CURRENT COUNTY ACTIONS**

There are privately maintained roads in El Dorado County, many of which are surfaced with serpentine rock. The maintenance of these privately maintained roads are the responsibility of adjacent property owners. "Residents are advised to verify the type of surface used on their private roads and driveways and to determine the appropriateness of resurfacing their roads," said Laura S. Gill, the County's Chief Administrative Officer. At this time, the County is not aware of any federal or state grants available for financing the chip sealing of private roads. The County is currently updating its inventory of County-maintained roads to verify that any that may contain asbestos aggregate are all seal coated.

"For over a decade, the County has been enforcing County and state regulations that control the use of serpentine rock for road resurfacing," notes Jon Morgan, the County's Director of Environmental Management. Since 1990, El Dorado County has been actively enforcing County regulations and the California Air Resources Board's Air Toxic Control Measure 93106 regulating the use of serpentine rock for road surfacing. As amended in 2000, this State regulation now prevents rock containing detectable levels of asbestos from being used to surface public or private roads in the County.

Individuals interested in learning more about naturally occurring asbestos and what the County and other agencies have been doing about it should visit the County's web site at:

<http://www.co.el-dorado.ca.us/emd/apcd/asbestos.html>

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