



determined that using a mechanical buffer with abrasive pads on floor mastic was potentially subject to the Asbestos National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP).

Based on further review of your statement that floor mastic is not Category I asbestos-containing material but Category II asbestos-containing material, I agree with you. While floor mastic has chemical and physical properties similar to those materials identified as Category I asbestos-containing materials, it is not specifically identified in the regulations as a Category I asbestos-containing material. Category I asbestos-containing materials "means asbestos-containing packings, gaskets, resilient floor covering and asphalt roofing products containing more than 1 percent asbestos as determined" using polarized light microscopy.

However, the change in category designation does not change the outcome of our previous interpretation. The Agency defines Regulated Asbestos-Containing Material (RACM) as:

(a) Friable asbestos material. (b) Category I nonfriable asbestos- containing material that has become friable, (c) Category I nonfriable asbestos-containing material that will be or has been subjected to sanding, grinding, cutting, or abrading, or (d) Category II nonfriable asbestos-containing material that has a high probability of becoming or has become crumbled, pulverized or reduced to powder by the forces expected to act on the material in the course of the demolition or renovation operations. 40 C.F.R. SS 61.141.

In paragraph (d), Category II nonfriable asbestos-containing material (floor mastic) that has a high probability of becoming or has become crumbled, pulverized or reduced to powder by the forces acting on the material during renovation or demolition operations causes the floor mastic to become regulated. The applicable threshold amount, 160 square feet, must also be met for the material to be regulated.

It is EPA's position that the use of a mechanical buffer with an abrasive pad on floor mastic would cause the floor mastic to become friable. Specifically, the application of an abrasive spinning pad creates friction which causes the floor mastic to become crumbled, pulverized or reduced to powder during the renovation or demolition operation. Without the application of solvents or any other liquid to the floor mastic, the floor mastic would create visible emissions. The Agency will not attempt to identify which products are abrasive or non-abrasive from a regulatory perspective. It is the responsibility of the owner/operator to make sure the work practices do not violate the asbestos NESHAP. In conclusion, while the floor mastic was incorrectly categorized in a previous determination, it does not change the outcome of that previous determination.

I appreciate the opportunity to respond to your question. However, if you have additional questions, please contact the Region 3 asbestos NESHAP coordinator, Ms. Tia Chambers. Ms. Chambers telephone number is: (215) 814-2164. If you have specific questions regarding this letter, please contact Everett Bishop of my staff. His telephone number is (202) 564-7032 or by email at [bishop.everett@epa.gov](mailto:bishop.everett@epa.gov).

Very Truly Yours,

Michael Alushin, Director  
Compliance Assessment and Media Programs Division Office of Compliance

cc: Chris Kaczmarek, OGC  
Susan Fairchild, OAQPS  
Charlie Garlow, OCE  
Tia Chambers, Region 3