

Michigan Asbestos Lawyer and Local Resident Concerned About the Safety of Potential Roosevelt School Demolition

BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN, USA, July 19, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Keego Harbor Community is grappling with the planned demolition of [Roosevelt Elementary School](#) by the West Bloomfield School District. Local resident, Eric Abramson is the president and shareholder of Serling & Abramson, P.C., a law firm with a deep-rooted history in [asbestos](#), [mesothelioma](#), and lung cancer litigation.

His firm represented hundreds of Michigan school districts in asbestos building damages litigation. Abramson wishes to offer clarity on the legal framework and safety measures surrounding asbestos in schools and historical buildings.

Roosevelt Elementary, a century-old institution, has been at the heart of local debates about its future. While the West Bloomfield School District moves forward with demolition plans, concerns over asbestos exposure have intensified. Eric Abramson aims to provide educational insights into the legalities and safety standards that govern such projects.

Understanding Asbestos Laws and Regulations



Roosevelt Elementary School in Keego Harbor, MI



Eric Abramson, President, Shareholder & Trial Attorney for Serling & Abramson, P.C.

Under federal law, the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) mandates rigorous standards for inspection, abatement, and management of asbestos in schools. Additionally, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) enforce strict regulations to protect public health during demolition and renovation projects involving asbestos. Before demolition or any disturbance of asbestos containing materials, rigorous safety measures must be undertaken.

Addressing Community Concerns

The potential demolition of Roosevelt Elementary has sparked concerns among Keego Harbor residents about asbestos exposure. Last August, the West Bloomfield School District hired Arch Environmental to provide an asbestos inspection report for Roosevelt, which confirmed that asbestos-containing materials (ACM) were abundantly present in more than 65,000 square feet of the building, estimating abatement costs up to \$816,000. However, subsequent bids for the abatement were significantly lower, ranging between \$93,000 and \$200,000, raising concerns about the thoroughness of the proposed abatement. To date, the school district has not disclosed the reasons for these discrepancies, fostering deep concern among local citizens.

Additionally, a proposal was voted on by West Bloomfield residents to pass a millage to fund improvements at Roosevelt School. Instead, those funds have been used in preparation for demolition and placed in the general fund for West Bloomfield School District, raising further questions about the district's financial decisions.

Eric Abramson, a homeowner in the breathing zone of the school, expressed serious concerns about compliance with mandatory abatement procedures. "As a resident and community member, I am deeply worried about the asbestos abatement process at Roosevelt Elementary. From our view of the testing documents, the very limited testing done is not sufficient to identify all of the asbestos-containing materials throughout the building. If you are going to conduct a legitimate survey for asbestos-containing materials, you have to look in all places known to contain asbestos, such as piping and mechanical rooms and equipment throughout the entire building or else it must be assumed that there are asbestos-containing materials present," Abramson emphasized.

"In the event that you are unable to access areas of suspected asbestos products, it also must be assumed that asbestos is present and follow NESHAP's [National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutant] regulations when demolishing the building, including adequately wetting down all suspected asbestos-containing materials and equipment. With the information we've received, we have concerns remaining. It's the responsibility of the school district to be fully transparent about their findings. Cutting corners to save on cost cannot take precedent over community safety," Abramson continued.

"I've talked with many community members who share my concern about whether required

abatement procedures will be followed, given the proposed budget. The health and safety of our community must be the top priority."

Legal and Safety Standards During Demolition

Adhering to legal standards is crucial. State and federal regulations stipulate detailed protocols for asbestos removal, including:

- **Licensed Contractors:** Engaging certified professionals trained in asbestos removal.
- **Containment Measures:** Implementing barriers and negative air pressure systems to prevent asbestos fibers from spreading.
- **Air Monitoring:** Conducting continuous air quality testing to ensure safety during the abatement process.
- **Proper Disposal:** Following stringent guidelines for the safe disposal of asbestos materials.

The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) has conducted follow-up testing at Roosevelt, finding no asbestos in several samples. However, community members and activists continue to express concerns, advocating for a more comprehensive abatement approach to ensure public safety.

Serling & Abramson's History with School Asbestos Cases

Serling & Abramson, P.C., including our Of Counsel attorney, Philip Goodman, have a long history of advocating for Michigan schools in asbestos-related cases. In 1984, the firm filed a class action lawsuit involving asbestos in schools. This lawsuit sought to recoup property damage costs for Michigan public and private schools against manufacturers and distributors of asbestos-containing materials, who, the evidence showed, knew of the hazards of asbestos before and during the time they made and sold these products.

The case, filed in Wayne County Circuit Court in Detroit, involved 332 Michigan school districts and several private schools, encompassing nearly 2,000 buildings. The lawsuit named over 50 defendants, resulting in settlements exceeding one hundred million dollars. These funds helped Michigan schools remove dangerous asbestos products from their buildings, enhancing safety for students, teachers, employees, and visitors. West Bloomfield Schools opted out of the class action.

Conclusion

Serling & Abramson, P.C. remains dedicated to promoting public health and safety in all our projects impacting asbestos. The community must remain engaged, seek information, and support initiatives that uphold safety standards. For more information or to discuss your

concerns, please contact us.

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