

Welcome to the first newsletter of the Tremolite Asbestos Registry (TAR). Thank you for your participation. The intent of this newsletter is to keep you informed of recent activities related to the TAR.

A registry contains detailed information on individuals and is periodically updated. The TAR is a registry of people who have likely been exposed to the asbestos that contaminated the vermiculite mined in Libby, Montana. The types of information in the TAR are as follows:

- Contact-Allows ATSDR to get in touch with you
- Demographic-Describes your age, race, and gender
- Exposure-Describes how you may have been exposed to asbestos
- Outcome-Includes information about a registrant's illness that may be related to asbestos exposure

ATSDR's plan is to collect new information from you periodically to find out if you have moved or if your health has changed.

The purposes of the TAR fall under the following categories:

- Communication-To rapidly communicate with registrants. In 2003, ATSDR used the TAR to let registrants know about free screening that was available through the Montana Asbestos Screening and Surveillance Activity

- Education-To provide education to registrants about asbestos-related disease and its diagnosis and treatment
- Research-To facilitate studies of the registrants' health. The goal of these health studies is to increase our understanding how tremolite asbestos may cause disease. Increased understanding of the health effects associated with exposure to tremolite asbestos is important to the people exposed in Libby, and to people who may have been exposed to tremolite at other sites nationwide. As new information related to the TAR becomes available, we will post it on the TAR Web site at [www.atsdr.cdc.gov/tar/index.html](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/tar/index.html).



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## Agencies and Services in Libby, Montana

Information about the following federal and private agencies and services relevant to asbestos-related disease (ARD) has been provided to the Libby community.

### Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)

ATSDR's vision is to protect people's health from toxic exposures. ATSDR conducted community screening in Libby from 2000-2001. By law, ATSDR cannot provide medical diagnoses.

ATSDR can be reached at 1-888-422-8737 or at [www.atsdr.cdc.gov/](http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/).



### Community Advisory Group (CAG)

The Community Advisory Group (CAG) was set up by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to allow citizens to voice their concerns about asbestos-related disease and other health issues in a structured meeting format. The group's meetings help the EPA to communicate with the public and to share information, as well as answer questions on how the clean-up is progressing. Several sub-committees have been formed from the CAG to address specific concerns.

CAG meeting summaries can be viewed at <http://www.epa.gov/region8/superfund/libby/archives.html#2>.

### Environmental Protection Agency

The mission of the EPA is to protect human health and the environment. Since 1970, EPA has been working for a cleaner, healthier environment for the American people. In Libby, the EPA is responsible for clean-up actions. EPA normally does not clean residences; this is a special action in Libby. The EPA cannot provide health care or health care information. The EPA can be reached at 1-866-457-2690 or at <http://www.epa.gov/region8/superfund/libby/index.html>.

### Lincoln County Community Health Center

The Lincoln County Community Health Center is a federally funded health center for primary care in Libby, Troy, and Eureka, Montana. The health center is designed to provide universal access to primary health care services. Sliding-scale fees are adjusted to the patient's ability to pay.

The Lincoln County Community Health Center can be reached at:  
711 California Avenue  
Libby, MT 59923  
(406) 293-3755  
or at <http://www.lcchc.org/>.



### Center for Asbestos-Related Disease

The Center for Asbestos-Related Disease (CARD) is a non-profit clinic devoted to the care of current and former Lincoln County residents whose health was impacted by exposure to Libby asbestos. CARD provides care, support, and research needed for asbestos-related diseases, including screening and diagnosis.



CARD can be reached at:  
308 Louisiana Avenue  
Libby, Montana 59923  
(406) 293-9274 or at  
<http://www.libbycard.org/index.cfm>.

## **CARD Outreach Recovery Assistance**

Card Outreach Recovery Assistance (CORA) addresses the problems that can emerge in everyday life because of asbestos-related health problems. CORA can provide individual education as well as one-on-one supportive and crisis counseling related to:

- Staying healthy
- Learning to cope with and adapt to health limitations
- Recognizing and managing chronic stress

To access CORA services, call Tanis Hernandez at the CARD clinic at (406) 293-9274.



## **Asbestos-Related Disease Network**

The Asbestos-Related Disease Network (ARD NET) helps people determine the services for which they may be eligible. ARD NET also helps people fill out applications as needed. This assistance includes applying for Social Security, Medicaid, Medicare, drug assistance, or other programs that may address unmet needs or improve quality of life. Direct services include home assistance, such as personal care, and assistance with housework or heavy household activities. Most ARD NET programs are available to all people living with asbestos related disease, although some specific programs have eligibility requirements. ARD Net is funded through a Rural Health Outreach Grant.

ARD NET can be reached at:  
308 Louisiana Ave. Suite 3  
Libby, MT 59923  
(406) 293-4600

## **Montana Asbestos Screening and Surveillance Activity**

Montana Asbestos Screening and Surveillance Activity (MASSA) is a new screening program conducted by the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. Free screening is offered to people who lived, worked, or played in the Libby area for at least 6 months prior to December 31, 1990. The screening includes a:

- face-to-face interview
- chest x-ray, and a
- spirometry test

The MASSA clinic can be reached at:  
609 Mineral Avenue  
Libby, Montana 59923  
(406) 293-5060 or 1-800-797-6143

It is important to take care of yourself when you have an asbestos-related illness. Even if you haven't started showing symptoms, damage to your lungs may have occurred. A good care tip is to practice relaxation and breathing techniques. The feeling of not being able to get enough air into your lungs can be frightening. Breathing training helps you control your rate of breathing and your breathing pattern. Control of your breathing rate and pattern lowers the risk that used air will not stay in your lungs and occupy space needed for new air.

One of the best ways to care for yourself is to avoid cigarette smoke. Smoking can increase the rate of disease progression and also increases the risk of lung cancer. If you are a smoker, quitting is a good idea. If you live with a smoker, urge them to quit. Smoking can speed up the onset of respiratory problems. Quitting now will greatly improve your health. You will be able to take deeper breaths, which will help keep your lungs clean. The blood vessels in your respiratory system will relax and allow your blood to flow normally. This blood flow will ease the stress on your heart, and your heart will not have to work so hard. The tissue in your lungs will breathe easier.

## Want to Quit Smoking?

A structured smoking cessation program has a good chance of successfully helping a smoker quit the habit. Speak with your health care provider about referrals to successful programs in your area, or contact the American Lung Association or American Cancer Society for more information about smoking cessation. In Libby, contact the CARD Clinic or MASSA for information and programs in your area. The Montana Tobacco Quit Line provides free information, free cessation treatment counseling, and free supplies (patches and gum) for those people in Montana who are trying to quit tobacco. The program has a very high success rate. Professional counselors will set up five telephone-counseling sessions at each client's convenience. The Quit Line sends free patches for smokers or gum for tobacco chewers in six-week quantities. The counseling and supplies continue until the person is tobacco free. When you are ready to set a quit date, call the Quit Line toll free at 1 (866) 485-QUIT.

If you are interested in a tobacco-free Montana, join the Tobacco Prevention coalition. Call Barb Guthneck at (406) 293-3951 or email her at [bguthneck@yahoo.com](mailto:bguthneck@yahoo.com).

There are many more self-care activities in the brochure, "Living with Asbestos-Related Illnesses" developed by ATSDR. A copy of this brochure is included with this newsletter.