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By Jim Earle



"Even though your cigarette is not in the building, I'm not sure that you're complying with the spirit of the law."

U.S. government moves for banning of asbestos

Associated Press
WASHINGTON — The government moved Thursday for the first time to ban deadly asbestos, a widely-used substance that officials say causes up to 12,000 cancer cases annually in the United States.

Under a two-phased attack, the Environmental Protection Agency proposed an immediate ban in five product categories, mostly in the construction area. The EPA said it wants to cleanse the environment over the next decade of all products containing the known carcinogen.

The decision, attacked by an industry group as unwarranted, culminated more than six years of regulatory soul-searching within the government and months of in-

fighting between the EPA and the Office of Management and Budget.

EPA Administrator Lee M. Thomas said human health — not monetary cost — was the EPA's foremost concern.

Thomas said it would take about a year for the agency to complete public hearings and administrative review of the proposed asbestos rule, which has been in the works since late 1979.

The ban, when fully implemented, will avert as many as 1,900 deaths from asbestos-related lung cancer over the next 15 years, Thomas said.

"We are taking this action because of the significant and well-documented threat to health that asbestos

represents," he told a news conference. "No level of exposure is without risk."

Because of a legally binding step-by-step process for issuing government rules and regulations, the ban will not take place instantly.

Agency spokesman Dave Ryan said the plan to remove asbestos from five product areas probably will be formally published next week in the Federal Register, the compendium of government regulatory and rule-making proposals.

Thomas said effective substitute materials are available for these products: clothing used by firemen and workers in high-temperature areas; roofing felts; flooring felts; floor tiles; and cement pipe and fittings.

Eight Hormel strikers get arrested

Associated Press
AUSTIN, Minn. — Strikers attempting to block entry to the Hormel meatpacking plant were dragged from their cars and arrested Thursday, while the two sides in the dispute met with a fact-finder at the governor's urging.

Mower County Sheriff Wayne Goodnature said eight people were arrested by police for parking their cars on Interstate 90, used by local officials and the National Guard to bring workers to the strike-torn Geo. A. Hormel & Co. plant.

Goodnature said about 25 cars slowed to a crawl near the Hormel off-ramp, and several stopped and turned off their engines.

Everybody was asked to leave, Goodnature said, and when the order wasn't obeyed the occupants were taken from their vehicles.

Police shattered windows in two of the cars when occupants locked the doors, he said, and one person was treated for minor injuries from broken glass.

Gov. Rudy Perpich stepped into the dispute between the company and strikers for the second time in as many weeks, calling a meeting with a neutral fact-finder.

State officials hoped the talks would break the 5½-month strike

"Our people haven't committed any violence..."
Jim Guyette, president of Local P-9 of the United Food and Commercial Workers.

which has led to scattered violence since Monday.

"Our people haven't committed any violence and all of a sudden it's being heaped upon them. It's a tragedy, and I think it's a mistake," said Jim Guyette, president of Local P-9 of the United Food and Commercial Workers.

Sources say VA chief planning to resign

Associated Press
WASHINGTON — Veterans Administration head Harry N. Walters is planning to resign, government sources said Thursday.

Walters' resignation is expected imminently, said sources in government and close to the VA who spoke only on condition they not be identified.

Among the leading candidates to replace Walters in the post, according to the sources, is Selective Service director Thomas K. Turnage.

A phone call to Turnage was transferred to his chief of staff, Col. Jim DeWire, who said, "I can't make a comment."

Walters, contacted by telephone, declined to comment on when he

Jeff McAnally, a union member who was among those arrested said, "I think they're treating us more like we have killed 20 people than just having a little demonstration."

Goodnature said two National Guard armored personnel carriers were on the scene to handle a blockade in the event that large trucks were used by the union, but the Guardsmen were not needed.

Al Zack, a Boston attorney acting as fact-finder in the contract dispute, said he and Paul Goldberg, director of the state Bureau of Mediation Services, had met with each side separately.

Leaders of both sides were tight-lipped, shutting in and out of the meeting room.

Some 1,500 union meatpackers walked off the job Aug. 17 after Hormel cut wages by 23 percent and dropped the base wage from \$10.69 to \$8.25 an hour. The company said the move was needed to remain competitive.

would resign but acknowledged he was eager to leave the post.

Sources said Walters hopes to leave the job Jan. 31, and that a White House announcement of the move was being delayed until a successor is chosen.

Walters, 49, a former West Point football star, became VA administrator on Nov. 22, 1982.

U.S. law limits time banks may hold deposited checks

Associated Press
WASHINGTON — The House passed a bill Thursday to limit the time banks can hold deposited checks and thus curtail what a chief sponsor called an outlandish policy that allows banks to profit from the so-called float.

The House measure, passed 282-11, would force financial institutions to give customers access to their money under a set timetable — in some cases quicker than they do now.

House Banking Committee Chairman Fernand J. St Germain, D-R.I., chief proponent of the check hold bill, told his colleagues banks now play the float game with customers' money to earn billions of dollars through interest and fees on checks inadvertently bounced by depositors.

"In all too many cases, depositors don't have access to the money they have earned," St Germain said. "It is tied up by banking policies — check hold policies — that say the cus-

tomers has to wait days, and days, and sometimes, weeks and weeks, before the bank says the money is available."

Before approving the bill, the House passed by voice vote an amendment that would permit bankers to hold a check longer than the timetable if they suspect the check may not clear because of fraud or bankruptcy.

St Germain opposed the so-called good faith clause, saying it was not needed because more than 99 percent of all checks written are paid the first time through the collection process and half the 350 million checks returned unpaid each year go through the second time.

During the first year after the bill became law, banks would have to make deposits available in as little time as the next business day for cash, wire transfers, checks less than \$100, all government checks, cashiers checks, certified checks and checks drawn and deposited on in-state branches of the same bank.



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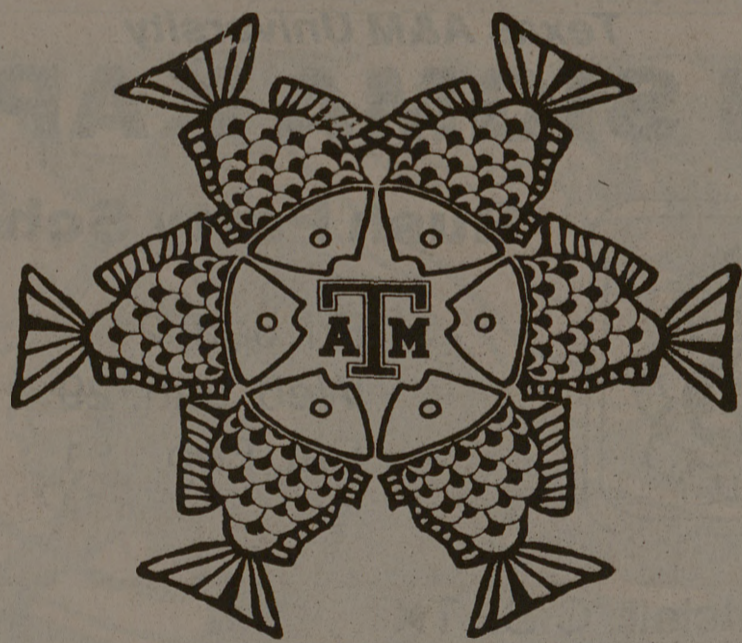
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