



Asbestos still a concern in MSU

by Bonar Tucker

Although the asbestos removal project in Moyer Student Union was costly and time consuming, it may not have tackled the entire problem.

"Asbestos is still in the ceiling," said Theresa Chiang, director of the building. "We didn't remove any from the third floor. We didn't remove what will not be disturbed."

But disruption may have already taken place. During the construction that began in June and continues today, the walls have rumbled and the windows have vibrated—enough, in fact, that tiles have fallen from the ceiling on the third floor. Two business offices are located on that floor.

"As long as no one is pounding on the building or drilling any holes, things will be pretty safe," said an official at Central Environmental.

But pounding and drilling on MSU have been common for months.

The Health Effects Institute-Asbestos Research concluded (after seven years) that "Asbestos-containing material within buildings in good repair is unlikely to expose office workers and other general occupants to airborne asbestos fiber concentrations . . ."

But the lack of good repair was a key reason for the renovation of MSU in the first

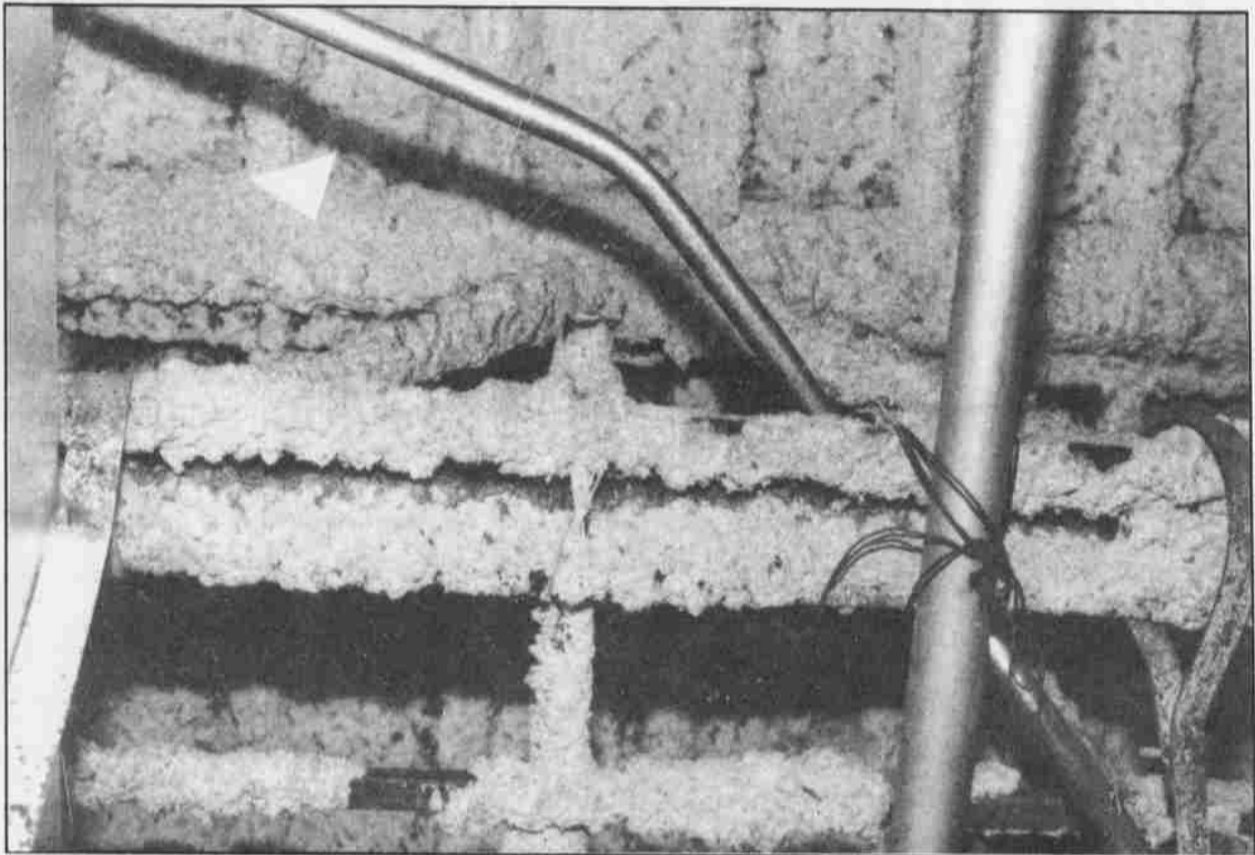
place. Age had taken its toll and left the building in need of relief from leaky ceilings and old structures. Repairs remain needed to the third floor.

Dennis Hayes, president of the environmental group Green Seal said in an article for USA Weekend, "As long as asbestos remains securely bonded, as in vinyl floor tile, there is little risk. But when asbestos breaks down, microscopic fibers can be inhaled or ingested. The fibers can lodge in the internal organs, particularly in the lungs, and cause serious, irreversible, even fatal, illness."

Harold Glasser, the enforcement superintendent from the Health Department in Las Vegas, said that although the contractor in charge of an asbestos abatement (removal) job will check the air before allowing others to go in, the Environmental Protection Agency mandates that the Health Department also check the job. However, in the case of UNLV's student union, that responsibility was not fulfilled.

"It was my responsibility to check [at UNLV]," Glasser said. "But I just didn't get to it."

Eric Raecke, assistant director of Facilities Management at UNLV, said that air quality clearance checks were taken only in the areas of construction. Other areas, such as those on the



Asbestos found in the fire proofing at MSU.

third floor, have not been checked, even though the ceiling tiles have been dislodged and the fireproofing, which is believed to contain asbestos, sits just above the tiles on steel structures.

"I don't think that's asbestos up there. That's a fire retardant material," said Robert Ackerman, vice president for Student Services. He continued, "I have trouble believing there's enough banging going on to have ceiling tiles fall down."

see ASBESTOS page 3

Asbestos removal contractor for MSU now out of business

by Bonar Tucker

The contractor, in charge of removing the asbestos from the student union, is now out of business. This could create reliability doubts as to the safety measures used during the removal of a potentially fatal substance.

The abatement (removal) of asbestos is a lengthy process and is regulated by state and federal laws. First, a con-

sultant is hired who takes the background air samples before the renovation begins. It is the consultant who makes the plans and specifications for removal or containment of the asbestos. The consultant for the job at Moyer Student Union was Converse Environmental.

see CONTRACTOR page 3

Reform in Student Loan Program may mean less hassle

by Bonar Tucker

There may be more money and less hassle for students trying to get college loans if overhauls proposed by two senators are met with approval.

Existing federal guaranteed student loan programs would be replaced with a new program that ties loan repayment to post-college income. And when its time to collect on the loan, the IRS would take care of collections, according to a proposed amendment by Dave Durenberger (R. Minn.) and Paul Simon (D. Ill.).

"Federal student aid programs need a fundamental overhaul," Durenberger said when he introduced the Financial Aid for All Students Act of 1991.

Instead of the Higher Education Act, which now promises money to banks, scholarships would be offered for top students, Pell grants would be increased and loans would be granted directly to students.

The proposal would begin in the 1994-95 academic year. It would enable students, regardless of income, to receive up to \$6,500 in loans for their first two years. Another \$8,000 would be available for school for the

last two years and up to \$11,000 per year could go to graduate students.

Depending upon the size of their income from their job after graduation, increased income tax would be withheld by their employer to repay the education loan account.

Judy Belanger, financial aid director at UNLV, said the Department of Education is probably not in favor of this new proposal because it would require adding an administrative quality to it. However, she said she would be in favor of implementing the plan provided it were tested in mod-

eration.

"The federal government tends to take a shotgun approach to things," Belanger said. "They make changes sometimes without testing properly first. A pilot program where 10 percent of the schools instituted this program would be an adequate way to test."

Not everyone is happy with the Durenberger-Simon proposal. Education Secretary Lamar Alexander opposed direct loan programs in a letter to U.S. Rep. Wil-

see STUDENT LOANS page 3

INSIDE...

OPINION

Santa sings early Christmas carols
— page 6



ENTERTAINMENT

Raul Julia stars in
"The Addams Family"
— page 17

