



Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, JANUARY 10, 2008
WWW.USDOJ.GOV

ENRD
(202) 514-2007
TDD (202) 514-1888

Environmental Supervisor Sentenced for Violations at Patuxent River Naval Air Station

WASHINGTON—Robert Langill of Woburn, Mass., was sentenced today in U.S. District Court in Greenbelt, Md., to 60 days in prison, 10 months home detention, and 2 years of supervised release for violating the Clean Air Act in connection with asbestos abatement at the U.S. Naval Air Station, Patuxent River, announced Ronald J. Tenpas, Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department's Environment and Natural Resources Division and Rod J. Rosenstein, U.S. Attorney for the District of Maryland.

Langill pleaded guilty on Oct. 26, 2007, before U.S. District Judge Peter J. Messitte. According to the plea agreement, from 2001 to 2004 Langill was employed with a Maryland asbestos abatement company as an asbestos abatement project supervisor. In 2003, the company was contracted by the U.S. Navy to remove asbestos-containing material from several buildings undergoing renovation or demolition at the U.S. Naval Air Station, Patuxent River, Md.

From October 2003 to Jan. 8, 2004, Langill directed the removal of transite panels containing asbestos from Buildings 692, 213 and 425 in a manner that violated federal asbestos abatement work practice standards, in that workers were directed to remove the panels by smashing them with hammers and crowbars and allowing the transite to fall to the ground and break, thereby rendering the asbestos friable and causing a release of asbestos fibers into the environment.

The transite panels from Building 692 had not been adequately wet and no notification of the abatement activity had been given to the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE), the state authority delegated to receive such notification, prior to the commencement of the abatement activity. In addition, unlabelled, improperly sealed bags of the broken asbestos-containing transite panels from Building 692 were stored on the grounds of the naval facility overnight in a truck owned by the company.

Asbestos has been designated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Congress in the Clean Air Act as a "hazardous" air pollutant. Asbestos causes a wide range of illnesses, including various forms of cancer and asbestosis, a usually fatal lung disease. The EPA has determined that there is no safe level of exposure to asbestos.

The case was investigated by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - Criminal Investigation Division and the Naval Criminal Investigative Service. The case was prosecuted by Trial Attorney Noreen McCarthy of the Justice Department's Environmental Crimes Section and Gina L. Simms, Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Maryland.

###