



U.S. Department of Justice

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Northern District of New York*

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PRESS RELEASE

September 9, 2011

Richard S. Hartunian, United States Attorney for the Northern District of New York, announced today that Leonard Pugh, 74, residing in Oriskany, N.Y., plead guilty in U.S. District Court in Syracuse to a violation of the Clean Air Act, in violation of 42 U.S.C. § 7413(c). He is scheduled to be sentenced on January 10, 2012 at 11 a.m. in Syracuse. Pugh faces a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

Mr. Pugh is an owner of a limited liability corporation known as the 44 Mohawk Street LLC, that owned a building located at 44 Old Mohawk Street in Whitesboro, NY. containing approximately 6000 square feet of asbestos. In entering his plea, Pugh admitted he hired an unlicensed individual to demolish the building with knowledge that he would not first notify the Environmental Protection Agency of the demolition activity, maintain the asbestos in a wet condition during removal activities, and dispose of the asbestos in a landfill authorized by law to accept asbestos contaminated materials.

Asbestos had been determined to cause various forms of cancer and asbestosis, a nearly always fatal lung disease. The Environmental Protection Agency has determined

that there is no safe level of exposure to asbestos.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the Environmental Protection Agency, and N.Y. State Department of Environmental Conservation. Inspectors with the NYS Department of Labor also assisted. Prosecution is being handled by Assistant United States Attorney Craig A. Benedict. Mr. Benedict may be contacted for questions regarding this case at 315-448-0672.