



Dr. Andréane Chénier
Ban Asbestos Canada
730 Gravel Drive
Hanmer, Ontario P3P 1R8

Dear Dr. Chénier,

Thank you for writing about banning asbestos.

The Green Party of Canada has always been at the forefront of the battle to ban asbestos. Prior to entering politics, I was a founder of Ban Asbestos Now Canada. Asbestos is toxic to the environment and human health – no level of exposure is safe. I would like to think the Green Party's work on the issue played a role in raising awareness so that other political parties now see the wisdom of a complete ban of asbestos.

It is long past time for Canada to join the many countries in the world that have banned asbestos completely. The Green Party will fight for a complete ban, accompanied by a comprehensive strategy to protect the public, support the victims, and address the lingering problem of asbestos in our built environment.

Now that Canada is no longer shamefully blocking the international community's efforts to add chrysotile asbestos to the Rotterdam Convention, we must redouble our efforts to completely eradicate it. The federal government needs to take a leadership role shifting the country away from asbestos safely. The problem posed by asbestos crosses all jurisdictions. To facilitate federal leadership in swiftly eradicating asbestos, a [Council of Canadian Governments](#) – representing the provinces, territories, municipalities and Indigenous governments – will meet to develop a National Strategy to Eradicate Asbestos. With all levels of government present, we will be well-equipped to comprehensively review the state of the problem and consult with stakeholders on the best ways to support affected workers, families, and communities. Among other things, we need income and medical support for victims, training for workers, and health and economic support for affected communities. We need to work together to safely remove all asbestos from existing buildings and coordinate legislation to totally ban its importation and use.

While working urgently towards a national ban, there are steps the federal government needs to take immediately. The Green Party is committed to establishing a National Building Registry of all Public Buildings which utilize Building Products containing Asbestos. Green Deputy Leader

Daniel Green has been pushing for this initiative for years and, in the absence of cooperation from the federal government, has compiled his own registry.

It is essential for the health and safety of those who work in these buildings and for those who maintain and repair the buildings. Canadians have a right to know what public buildings contain asbestos.

A National Vessel Registry of all Maritime Vessels which utilize Products and equipment containing Asbestos is another essential initiative to mitigate the impacts of past asbestos use. Canadian Shipyard Workers need to know the risks involved with working on particular equipment, systems, or vessel structures.

The Green Party will make the last week of April “Asbestos Awareness Week.” We need to honour those who have died from exposure to asbestos and to educate a new generation of workers in construction and heavy industry sectors about the dangers of asbestos. We need to do everything we can to ensure that the damage stops now.

We support the call of trades educators to develop a national standard apprenticeship known as “Hazmat Worker” so those that are involved in remediation have the developed skills and knowledge in proper procedure of remediation of asbestos products. We need to equip the new generation of workers with the knowledge to deal with the unique dangers of asbestos.

I am proud of the fact that the Green Party was the first federal political party to call for an end to the asbestos industry in Canada and a just transition for its workers. We will continue to fight for the health and safety of Canadian workers.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth May, O.C.
Leader of the Green Party of Canada

