

Trump's swift demolition of East Wing may have launched asbestos plumes

No response

On Thursday, Sen. Edward Markey (D-Mass.) sent a letter to ACECO, asking if it followed federal health and safety standards to mitigate risks of asbestos. "ACECO's work falls squarely within a network of federal regulations governing demolition, hazardous-material handling, and worker protection," the senator wrote.

In a separate letter Thursday, Sens. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.), Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.), and Gary Peters (D-Mich.) sought "lawful transparency" on the demolition, including the asbestos abatement plan.

In DC, asbestos abatement processes can only be done by a licensed contractor, who is required to notify the Department of Energy and Environment 10 days in advance of such work, then post notices of asbestos abatement around the area of work three days beforehand.

But reporting by the Post found that ACECO is not licensed to abate asbestos in DC. "Our understanding is that as of August 18, 2022, Aceco LLC is no longer engaged in asbestos abatement services," a DC Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection spokesperson told The Post. "The company's asbestos abatement license in the District of Columbia was voluntarily canceled by the owner on that date."

ACECO has not responded to questions from media and, amid the White House work, has taken down its website for the most part, only providing a page that says it's under construction.

ADA0's Reinstein told the Post that the White House has not responded to the organization's letter. "I learned 20 years ago when I cofounded ADA0, no response is a response," she told the Post.

As Ars Technica has reported, Trump has a startlingly supportive stance on the use of asbestos. In his 1997 book *The Art of the Comeback*, Trump wrote that asbestos is "100% safe, once applied." He blamed the mob for its reputation as a carcinogen, writing: "I believe that the movement against asbestos was led by the mob, because it was often mob-related companies that would do the asbestos removal."

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