

## [City of St. Louis Gets Away With Cheap Asbestos Removal](#)

(Posted by Tom Lamb at [www.AsbestosHUB.com](http://www.AsbestosHUB.com) on August 17, 2009)

Last fall, a federal judge ruled that the city of St. Louis violated federal clean air laws in an asbestos removal. Recently, that same judge reversed herself, allowing the city to escape sanctions for violating federal law when it used the wet method of asbestos removal.

The City of St. Louis violated the U.S. Clean Air Act when it used the wet method as it demolished subdivision homes to make way for a new runway at Lambert Airport from 2000 to 2004, despite the technique being unapproved.

The wet method of asbestos removal involves spraying a building with water as it is leveled. The theory is that the water will prevent the microscopic asbestos fibers from being released into the air or soil. But critics argue that the technique is unproven and dangerous.

The approved, but costlier, method involves removing the asbestos by hand and disposing of it in hazardous waste sites.

The judge in question reversed an earlier ruling that residents near the airport had legal standing to sue the city of St. Louis over its mishandling of the demolition under the Clean Air Act because the violations had occurred before the complaint was filed in May 2005 and weren't likely to occur again.

The EPA has said it didn't know the city was using the unapproved method until 2003, when Sen. Kit Bond, R-Mo., persuaded then-EPA Administrator Christine Todd Whitman to allow it.

The EPA withdrew permission in June 2004 and halted plans to use the same technique in Fort Worth, Texas.

The wet method is allowed by the EPA when a building in danger of imminent collapse has been ordered demolished. Other applications aren't permitted although the associate EPA administrator can make exceptions.

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Attorney Tom Lamb represents people in personal injury and wrongful death cases involving mesothelioma or other asbestos cancers. The above article was posted originally on his blog, **Asbestos HUB** – with active links and readers' comments.  
<http://AsbestosHUB.com>