

[Charest And Asbestos: First Hypocrisy, Now Outright Lies?](#)

(Posted by Tom Lamb at www.AsbestosHUB.com on February 12, 2010; see <http://bit.ly/aNyUX3>)

In a [February 10, 2010 letter to Jean Charest, Premier of Quebec](#), 14 prominent Canadian physicians expressed outrage at Charest's apparent false statements regarding the World Health Organization's position on asbestos.

According to a quote in *La Presse*, Charest said, "Chrysotile (asbestos) can be used in a safe manner; this is what WHO reports say."

Yet, as the angry physicians point out, the WHO takes the exact opposite of this position. The WHO's actual position is that "the most efficient way to eliminate all asbestos-related diseases is to stop the use of all types of asbestos."

In their letter the physicians say:

Premier Charest, you have the right to oppose the WHO position. However, and especially because of the public trust in your position, you do not have the right to misrepresent the WHO position as being what you perhaps wish it were, instead of what it is.

This more recent outcry comes in the wake of a [January 28, 2010 letter from scientists from 28 countries pleading with Charest to ban all exports of asbestos](#) from Quebec. The scientist sought to enlighten Charest to his own double standard exposed by the discrepancy between Quebec's strict asbestos standards and the dangerously under-regulated use of exported asbestos in India.

According to an article from *The Gazette*, [On hot seat over asbestos](#), Dr. Menzies from Montreal Chest Institute called Charest's actions and mind-set morally unacceptable. "[S]elling asbestos to countries that clearly lack the resources to enforce workplace safety standards is like selling guns to children. You can say that you warned them about the danger, but it is still morally unacceptable."

This powerful letter had 8 main points of note:

1. Quebec itself is experiencing an epidemic of asbestos-related disease
2. Quebec itself does not use chrysotile asbestos
3. Quebec is removing chrysotile asbestos from its buildings
4. Quebec itself has failed to achieve "safe use" of chrysotile asbestos
5. There is no safe exposure level for chrysotile asbestos
6. Industry misinformation is funded by your government
7. Efforts by the asbestos industry to intimidate and silence scientists
8. Sabotage of a U.N. environmental convention

Seemingly unaffected by its message, Charest went to India on an economic trade mission and accepted [no responsibility for the mass amounts of asbestos being exported to India](#) from Quebec. In fact, it was on this mission that Charest made these false statements.

Charest is reported as saying that the Quebec has closed its mind on the asbestos question a long time ago and will not change its position.

The physicians put it best, "Premier Charest, a closed mind is a very dangerous thing, particularly in a political leader."

For further background see, [Charest Side-Steps Asbestos Export Responsibility As He Applauds His Own Environmental Awareness](#) and [Scientists Urge Premier Of Quebec To Stop The Hypocrisy And Ban Asbestos Exports](#).

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>