

State of Connecticut  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY



PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE  
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
HARTFORD, CT 06106-1591

MOLD WORKING GROUP

Meeting Summary

Wednesday, October 25, 2023

10:00 AM in Room 1B of the LOB and Zoom and YouTube Live

Attendance: Rep. Steve Weir, Harry Amadasun, Chris Eident, Paul Januszewski  
Juliette Parker, Daniel Keune

I. Convene Meeting

- Rep. Steve Weir called the meeting to order at 10:03 AM.

II. Remarks by the Chair

- Rep. Weir referenced the "This Old House YouTube Video" and stated it showed the history of polybutylene piping and some practical methods for removal and replacement of these piping.
- He reported that he contacted and invited a plumber to participate on the Working Group, but he is unable to do so because of his workload. He asked members to come up with recommendations.
- He reminded members that the group is tasked with:
  - Investigating and evaluating the connection between polybutylene pipes and indoor mold
  - The impact of mold on the health of residents and potential solutions

### III. Discussion

- Mike Tortola explained the different types of indoor molds and its effects, and stated it is important to also determine if there is a water source contributing to the problem. Currently, there are no standards for mold, no safe or unsafe levels for measuring mold and compared this to asbestos which has a permissible exposure limit. He explained how the industry currently uses the asbestos exposure level to do a comparison control sample when conducting indoor inspection and how it is compared with the persons responses to determine if elevated levels of mold exist.
- Rep. Weir commented that it is highly likely that polybutylene pipes are or could be a contributing factor to mold growth if they are leaking and go undetected. There is also a human and health impact to this issue and there is no health care professional serving on the working group. The most valuable role this group can play, is to let people know that these pipes exist, that it could be in their homes, and what solutions are there to deal with these issues.
- Harry Amadasun referenced the current situation at Carriage Park Condominium Association and stated the residents were unaware of the existence of polybutylene pipes and that there was no documentation. He references the recently implemented PFAS limits and asked if the group would consider establishing measurable limits on mold. He stated that removal of these pipes from coverage by insurance companies will put a high financial responsibility on owners. He underscored the public health and financial risks.
- Rep. Weir asked Harry Amadasun if insurance companies are no longer providing coverage for condominiums with polybutylene pipes.
- Harry Amadasun clarified that the insurance companies are signaling their intent of removal of coverage. He referenced a meeting with the Deputy Commissioner at the Department of Insurance and added that Travelers Insurance Company have already dropped coverage. He added that the cost of coverage has already increased over 150% and that there is a decrease in the number of insurance companies willing to offer coverage.
- Rep. Weir asked the group if it would be acceptable to add a question regarding the presence of polybutylene pipes to the new buyer home inspection form to make new buyers aware of the potential problem.
- Daniel Keune pointed out that the rules are different for condominium associations and that they are required to include this information in their condominium documents and their resale certificate to make buyers aware. He informed the meeting that these pipes were sold and installed with a life expectancy of 30-40 years, and he listed two class

action lawsuits against the polybutylene pipe manufacturer and the company that made the fittings. He suggested including an education component in the recommendations.

- Rep. Weir reminded members that the issue was presented as an educational campaign, and not that the working group will have a final solution or restitution. It would be successful to recommend that future buyers are made aware of such situations. He asked Daniel Keune if the home inspection report forms could be amended to include the presence of polybutylene pipes.
- Daniel Keune informed the group that there is no standard form and that there is no communication from the legislature to condominium associations.
- Rep. Weir offered to contact the state condominium association to see how they communicate with their members.
- Harry Amadasun asked what would happen if it was found that a condominium association did not disclose the problem and that there were significant insurance issues.
- Juliette Parker asked if all condominiums built between a certain period would have these pipes. She added that she purchased a condominium that was built in 1974 and that she didn't know the type of piping, which makes it both a financial and education issue.
- Daniel Keune explained that the requirement is for the seller to answer the questions to the best of their ability and that there is no liability afterwards.
- Chris Eident asked if there is a known number of units with polybutylene piping/plumbing installed in CT during that time.
- Harry Amadasun referenced another working group that is trying to get data from several building departments but have encountered hurdles. He added that there is no negative ramification for condominium associations and the insurance companies who are allowed to keep increasing premiums and to drop coverage. He informed the group that Sen. Anwar's working group have engaged the Department of Consumer Protection, Department of Insurance & Department of Housing and US Housing and Urban Development to discuss creative solutions.
- Mike Tortora referenced the disclosure form and stated that it includes questions on environmental issues and that there is typically a financial impact on the sale of the home if there is the presence of items on the list. If this is added to the disclosure form, it will be more difficult to

negotiate into the price of the property since there is no way to quantify the risk.

- Daniel Keune referenced the assessment process for major building maintenance and added that the only way to remedy this situation is for condominium associations to acknowledge the pipes are beyond their life expectancy and to come up with a cost per unit to replace them.
- Rep. Weir asked if the pricing would be reflected as per square foot.
- Daniel Keune responded yes.
- Harry Amadasun explained the significant premium increases of approximately 15-20% and how it will increase again in the coming months.
- Rep. Weir reiterated, that education and awareness can have an impact. He asked members to submit suggested agenda items for the next meeting.

IV. Legislation and informational campaigns in other states regarding piping

- No discussion

V. Announcement of time and date of next meeting

- Next meeting will be on Wednesday, November 1, 2023, at 10:00 AM at the LOB and via Zoom.

VI. Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 AM.