

Asbestos

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expected asbestos to remain a major issue for many years, because as older schools undergo renovation, asbestos insulation will be found inside walls and will require expensive removal. The government orders for asbestos control required removal or sealing off of asbestos. Schools did not have to disturb the walls of

school buildings because asbestos within is considered sealed.

In addition to the alleged failings of Puentes, the state auditor also reported Tuesday that the EPA studied 156 school districts and found that 77 percent of them have not complied with federal asbestos safety regulations.

Bricmont said asbestos cleanup in schools becomes more a money issue than a health issue. He said there may be a renewed interest in seeking out problems and calling for cleanup, but asbestos removal is very expensive.

"Who's going to pay to clean it up? It's going to come down to that," Bricmont said.