

TO: Faculty Senate

FR: Faculty Welfare Committee
Charles W. Tucker (Sociology), Chair

RE: Report from Asbestos Abatement Task Force

DT: 12 October 1990

This report was accepted by the Committee for distribution to the Faculty and Staff.

Asbestos in University Buildings

The Faculty Welfare Committee's Task Force on Asbestos Abatement follows the Asbestos Abatement program on behalf of the faculty. The University of South Carolina filed suit to recover expenses pertaining to the removal of asbestos from campus buildings. The first phase of the suit was filed against approximately 18 defendants and covered 7 buildings: Physical Science Center, Law School, Business Administration (old wing), USC-Aiken Administration Building, Capstone Hall, Columbia Hall, and the USC-Spartanburg Administration Building.

The suit was settled out of court; the agreement awards approximately \$11 million to the University. After all expenses and fees the University has received \$5.7 million plus the permission of the court to file a \$3 million secondary suit against an insurance trust fund that has been established to pay expenses of one of the bankrupt defendants. The USC Administration is confident that the suit will be successful. A trust fund has been designated to pay for asbestos abatement and related expenses.

Asbestos has already been removed from Columbia Hall and the USC-Spartanburg Administration building. Asbestos abatement in the Law School and Business Administration will be deferred for the present. The Board of Trustees has approved abatement expenses of \$440,000 for the USC-Aiken Administration Building, \$500,000 for Capstone Hall, and \$2,500,000 for relocation expenses preparatory to abatement in PSC. These amounts have been approved by the Commission on Higher Education. Further legislative action is needed, but the CHE recommendations of this sort are seldom overturned. There will be \$2.3 million left in the trust fund after these expenses, plus an additional \$3 million due from the secondary suit. The administration indicates that major portion of these monies will be used to remove asbestos in the Physical Science Center.

Tentative plans for PSC include 1) renovation of the SCE&G building to allow Civil Engineering to move (leaving only Mechanical Engineering in Sumwalt). The SCE&G renovation requires \$1,573,000. 2) Renovating Sumwalt to accommodate some of the PSC faculty and their research programs will cost \$850,000. PSC abatement plans are not fully formulated, but will involve moving a few research or teaching programs at a time, and renovating the space as needed. The University's lawsuit estimated PSC expenses for abatement of \$5,088,000 and relocation expenses of \$4,942,000.

The second phase of the suit, covering 11 additional buildings, is set for trial in January. The suit asks for abatement expenses of \$2 million and relocation/lost income expenses of \$6-7 million.

Counsel has advised against any additional law suits since evidence is tenuous and proof of damage is minimal.