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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EPA cleaning up Asbestos site in Burley, Idaho

BURLEY – The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) confirms crews are cleaning up a burn site in Burley that is contaminated with asbestos. Two buildings were destroyed in a fire at 1222 and 1226 Overland Avenue in January. For several months the cleanup process was left to the landowner, but on August 17th the EPA took over. The South Central Public Health District (SCPHD) advises residents to stay clear of the site until the cleanup process is complete.

“During the cleanup work, we will spray water to keep the materials damp and we may also use a substance called a tackifier which will keep the asbestos fibers stuck in the debris to prevent them from becoming airborne during the cleanup process,” said Suzanne Skadowski, EPA Public Affairs Specialist. “We’ll also place air monitors on the workers and near the work site to ensure asbestos contaminated dust isn’t posing a threat to the community.”

Skadowski expects the work to take between two and four weeks to complete. Crews are using water to dampen the construction site and will transport the debris in double-lined containers to make sure nothing is released. A local landfill has the ability to safely dispose of the material from there.

At this point the EPA does not believe anyone was exposed to the asbestos, unless they dug through the debris without proper equipment. If you, or anyone you know, is concerned about exposure please visit your medical provider for a screening.

“Asbestos inhalation can cause serious health effects if enough is inhaled. Asbestos exposure should be taken seriously,” said Craig Paul, SCPHD Public Health Program Manager.

After exposure, asbestos can’t be removed from the lungs. If exposed, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advise taking good care of your lungs to slow or prevent disease.

This includes:

- Having regular medical exams
- Getting regular vaccinations against flu and pneumococcal pneumonia
- Quitting smoking
- Avoiding further asbestos exposure

For more information about Asbestos please check out the CDC’s website:

<https://www.epa.gov/asbestos/learn-about-asbestos#effects>

For other health concerns, please visit phd5.idaho.gov or call the Public Health Hotline 866-450-3594.