

# Union of Concerned Scientists

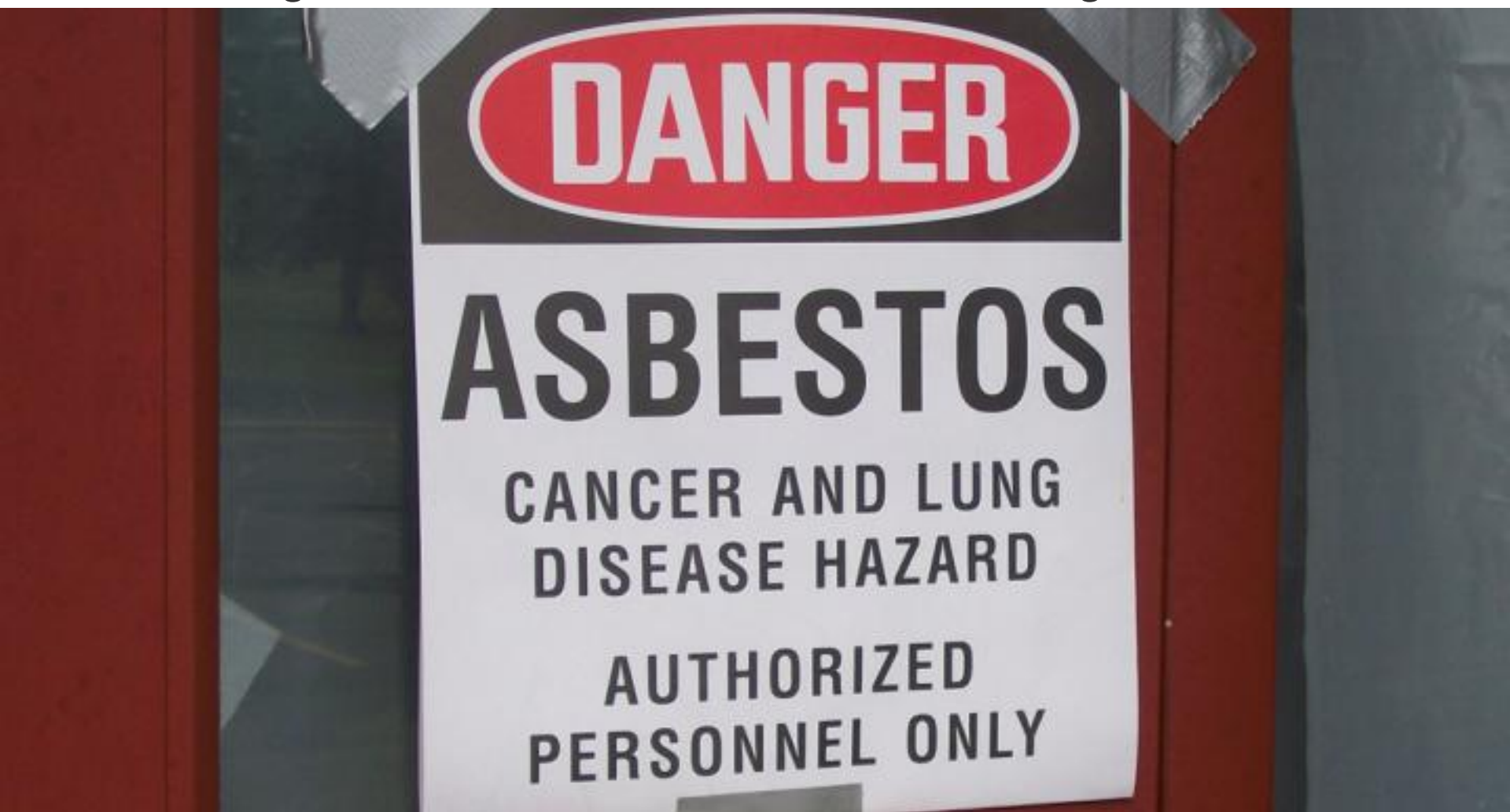
Science for a Healthy Planet and Safer World

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# EPA Officials Ignored Their Own Scientists on the Dangers of Asbestos



**What happened:** Officials at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) disregarded the advice of more than a dozen of its own scientists and lawyers who recommended that the agency ban the import of asbestos into the country, as 60 other nations have done. Instead, the EPA issued a rule that only restricted the import of asbestos, providing a regulated pathway for industry to use asbestos-containing products in the US.

**Why it matters:** When the EPA scientists voiced their concerns, they provided a thorough analysis of how the rule's contents and process was not supported by the best available science. The asbestos rule only examined six types of asbestos fibers for possible harms to health, a methodology that has been out of date for at least 30 years. Additionally, when evaluating the effects of asbestos, the rule failed to take into account all the harms that asbestos can cause people, a narrow approach that is likely to show asbestos as being less deadly than it actually is. Asbestos is a highly carcinogenic material that is responsible for about 40,000 deaths every year in the US. When EPA scientists say this material needs to be banned, they are using robust and comprehensive science to support their statement. By refusing to listen to their own scientists, EPA officials are jeopardizing the health and safety of people across the US and are failing to live up to the agency's [mission](#) which is to "protect human health and the environment."

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Learn more about how EPA officials failed to listen to their toxicologists on the dangers of [asbestos](#), a product that science has shown to be dangerous to human health since the 1920s.

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