

Around Town

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By Billy Ray McKelvy

De Queen Mayor

Occasionally the city receives a request for the fire department to burn a dilapidated building to clean up property. Unfortunately, using fire to remove an eyesore is not easy due to state regulations on asbestos.

Recently, the city received an e-mail message from the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality that details what conditions have to be met to demolish a building by fire.

Any structure burned for training purposes must be surveyed by a certified inspector to determine the presence of asbestos. Any asbestos-containing material must be removed before a training burn. Removal must be done by certified personnel working for a licensed firm and any asbestos-containing material must be transported to a landfill.

In addition, a notice of intent must be filed with ADEQ 10 working days before asbestos is removed. A second notice must be filed 10 days before the training burn.

Any fire department proposing to burn a structure for training must contact the ADEQ Air Division Enforcement Branch for compliance with open burning regulations.

The rules for burning structures are part of the ADEQ's Regulation 21 on asbestos abatement.

Although it is not impossible to demolish buildings by fire, the rules are intended to prevent the release of asbestos into the atmosphere.

Floor tile, siding and shingles are some of the most common materials that contain asbestos.