

FairWarning.org Statement

Mr. Levin:

Product safety and quality have always been primary concerns of Barretts Minerals Inc., which mines and processes talc in Montana. For a brief period in the mid 2000's, Barretts processed imported talc as well. Since 1992, when Barretts Minerals was incorporated, the talc sold by our company has undergone a robust quality control testing process to ensure product purity.

Barretts uses a rigorous testing process for its talc, whether from Montana or imported. From exploration, to mining, through processing, and finished product testing, a rigorous battery of tests are performed to ensure safety and compliance. These tests include diligent checks for the presence of asbestos. If an area sought to be mined shows the presence of asbestiform mineral, that area is not mined, in accordance with strict and standard operational protocols.

The testing Barretts performs is a first step in the overall qualification of talc minerals. More robust and state-of-the-art testing is performed in the Analytic lab in Easton, PA, where transmission electron microscopy and x-ray diffraction are used by highly qualified personnel. All analytical equipment and techniques used in talc testing comply with ASTM, NIOSH, MSHA, USP, and OSHA protocols for the detection of asbestos.

Since 1992, when it came into existence, Barretts's Montana talc has consistently shown no asbestos. Similarly, for the time that it imported talc, the imported talc also showed no asbestos. Barretts also certifies some of its Montana talc products as "USP Talc." One of the requirements for USP grade talc is "absence of asbestos" as USP defines that standard. In short, Barretts has had in place since 1992, when it began its corporate existence, a rigorous testing protocol to ensure safety and quality of its talc products.

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