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## News

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### National Committee on removal of asbestos recommends immediate destruction of 18 unoccupied EDC houses

**Average Rating****Date:** July 31, 2015**Domain:** Environment**Persona:** Business; Government; Citizen; Non-Citizen

**GIS – 31 July 2015:** The National Committee on the removal of asbestos in EDC/Ex-CHA houses has decided the immediate destruction of some 18 unoccupied houses constructed with materials containing asbestos. The houses are located in Verdun, Triolet, Telfair, St Julien, Olivia, L'Embrazure, La Chaux, Camp Diable, Bel Ombre, Benares, Argy and Amaury.

The destruction of these unoccupied houses is among a series of measures taken by the National Committee on the removal of asbestos who had its first meeting yesterday at the Lunch Room of

the National Assembly.

Chaired by the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Lands, Mr Showkutally Soodhun, the meeting brought together the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport, Mr Nandcoomar Bodha, the Minister of Health and Quality of Life, Mr Anil Gayan, the Minister of Environment, Sustainable Development, Disaster and Beach Management, Mr Raj Dayal, the Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment, Mr Prithvirajsing Roopun, the Minister of Local Government, Dr Anwar Husnoo, representatives of the Parliamentary opposition, several ministries and public agencies, civil societies, Non-Governmental Organisations, and trade unions. Its objective is to find suitable solutions for these families living in EDC/Ex-CHA houses built with materials containing asbestos.

According to a recent survey submitted to the Committee, in some 2,137 EDC housing units located in 59 sites across the country which have been extended by their owners, only parts of the dwellings contain asbestos. There are, however, 280 houses in fair condition built with materials containing asbestos. Another 45 houses with asbestos are in very poor conditions though occupied while 18 other derelict houses are unoccupied.

The Special Mobile Force and officers from the Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development, Disaster and Beach Management have been tasked with the destruction of the unoccupied houses and removal of asbestos in the other dwellings. They will first conduct site visits to take stock of the situation and devise actions which have to be taken. It will be followed by an inventory of necessary/existing equipment at the Special Mobile Force to determine that the agency is adequately equipped to undertake the assign task safely and without prejudice. The Ministry of Health and Quality of Life will be providing any required technical support. Afterwards, a report will be submitted to the Committee for necessary actions and funding.

For their part, the Ministry of Housing and Lands and the Ministry of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment will be working on the provision of temporary accommodations and/or housing facilities to the residents of those EDC houses. Meanwhile, the Committee will establish a time frame regarding actions that need to be taken for close monitoring.

It is to be recalled that the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development has agreed to disburse the required fund regarding the removal of remove asbestos in the EDC/Ex-CHA houses.

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