



Raoul Files Lawsuit Against Kroger and SSI Services Over Mishandled Asbestos At Taylorville Store

August 15 2022 12:16 PM

CHICAGO — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today announced a lawsuit against The Kroger Co. (Kroger) and SSI Services LLC in relation to the alleged improper handling and removal of materials containing asbestos from a grocery store in Taylorville, Illinois.



The lawsuit alleges that Kroger and SSI Services conducted unsafe renovations by leaving chipped floor tiles that contained asbestos in areas accessible to the public while the store was open, creating a substantial danger to public health. There is no known safe exposure level to asbestos. Inhalation of asbestos fibers can cause serious and fatal illnesses including malignant lung cancer, mesothelioma and asbestosis.

“Kroger and SSI Services have jeopardized the public’s health by exposing shoppers and employees to dangerous materials containing asbestos,” Raoul said. “The asbestos must be remediated before members of the public are allowed back into this store. I am committed to ensuring that Kroger and SSI Services are held accountable for creating this hazard and for preventing any further harm to the public’s health and the environment.”

The Attorney General's complaint alleges that the defendants failed to remove tiles and an adhesive known as mastic — both asbestos-containing materials — before doing work that would break up or dislodge the materials. Additionally, the complaint alleges that the defendants failed to ensure that all materials containing asbestos remained wet until collected and contained or treated in preparation for disposal. According to the complaint, Kroger and SSI Services also failed to properly dispose of all waste material that contained asbestos.

Observations of the broken tiles in public areas of the store led the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) to issue a seal order to protect public health on July 29. Raoul is now seeking remediation of all asbestos contamination in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations before the store is reopened.

“The Illinois EPA referred this case to the Attorney General's Office to ensure Kroger and SSI are held responsible for the improper removal of asbestos in the store, resulting in an unacceptable risk to the store's customers and employees,” said Illinois EPA Director John J. Kim. “We are committed to ensuring the store is properly remediated prior to reopening for the safety of the employees and customers.

Assistant Attorneys General Christina L. Nannini and Bridget I. Flynn are handling the case for Raoul's Environmental Bureau.