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SCHAKOWSKY: OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT REPORT FINDS LINK BETWEEN ARSENIC IN PLAYGROUNDS & INCREASED CANCER IN CHILDREN

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), the top Democrat on the Commerce, Trade, and Consumer Protection Subcommittee, today said that Congress has all the evidence it needs to pass legislation to permanently ban the use of arsenic treated wood. [A recent report by the Consumer Product Safety Commission](#) found that children who are exposed to playground equipment built with arsenic treated wood are at higher risk of developing lung or bladder cancer.

Schakowsky will reintroduce her bill to phase-out the use of arsenic treated lumber in residential settings. The bill would require the disposal of arsenic-treated lumber in lined landfills to prevent contamination of groundwater, require the EPA to conduct a risk assessment regarding arsenic, and provide monetary and technical assistance to schools and local communities.

"The evidence is clear: children who are exposed to playground equipment built with arsenic treated wood are at risk. Congress has a responsibility to protect the safety and health of our children by ridding our nation of this poisonous material." Schakowsky said.

Arsenic treated wood is found in virtually all residential structures, including wood used in playgrounds, play-structures, decks, picnic tables, landscaping timbers, residential fencing, patios and walkways/boardwalks. A 12-foot section of pressure-treated lumber contains about an ounce of arsenic, or enough to kill 250 people. Reports have found excessive arsenic levels in the soil surrounding playgrounds with arsenic treated lumber.

The Environmental Protection Agency announced that it reached an agreement with the industry to voluntarily transition consumer use of treated lumber products away from wood that contains arsenic in favor of new alternative wood preservatives by December 31, 2003. Schakowsky's said that a voluntary agreement is not enough and that legislation is needed to ensure that the industry would be required by law to phase out this dangerous product.