



PRESS RELEASE

Attorney General Frosh Files Criminal Charges for Illegal Demolition of Historic Property

BALTIMORE, MD (February 3, 2020) - Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh today announced the filing of [criminal charges](#) against William Anthony Culler, II, operating under the trade name Culler Group, for the unlawful demolition of the historic St. Vincent Infant Asylum buildings, located at 1411 Division Street, in Baltimore City.

The charges, filed in an eight-count Criminal Information, include, among other things, failure to obtain the proper permit and approval for the demolition of the property from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE); failure to properly inspect the property for the presence of asbestos; failure to notify MDE of the intent to engage in an asbestos project; and, failure to take reasonable steps to prevent asbestos from becoming airborne. Each charge is punishable by up to one year of incarceration and a fine of up to \$25,000.

“We allege Culler illegally demolished these buildings without proper notice and authorization, and without the required safeguards in place,” said Attorney General Frosh. “Asbestos is an extremely hazardous substance and can become airborne during demolition, endangering the health of workers and the surrounding community, including children.”

Demolition of the property began on or about February 12, 2018 and continued until February 26, 2018. MDE inspectors collected several samples of demolition debris to test for the presence of suspected asbestos-containing material. The samples were subsequently analyzed by the Department of Health’s Air Quality Laboratory and analysis confirmed the presence of regulated asbestos-containing material in one of the samples collected.

In July 2019, Attorney General Frosh also filed a [civil complaint](#) against Culler for similar charges.

In making today’s announcement, Attorney General Frosh thanked Environmental Crimes Unit Assistant Attorney General Kory Lemmert and Chief Investigator Thomas Waugh. A Criminal Information is merely an accusation of wrongdoing, and a defendant is presumed innocent until the State proves the defendant guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.