**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Automotive recyclers applaud federal action to eliminate import and use of asbestos brake pads in Canada**

**Will address critical health risk to recyclers managing end-of-life vehicles**

(Toronto, December 15th, 2016) The Automotive Recyclers of Canada (ARC) strongly supports the federal government’s announcement to ban the “manufacture, use, import and export” of asbestos-containing products including brake pads by 2018.

Every year approximately 1.6 million vehicles reach their end-of-life in Canada. These end-of-life vehicles (ELV) require proper end-of-life management including “depollution”, dismantling for parts salvage and metals recycling. Amongst materials such as fuels, oils, mercury switches and air conditioning refrigerants (such as chlorofluorocarbons and hydrochlorofluorocarbons) automotive recyclers must also contend with brake pads that may contain asbestos.

While vehicle manufacturers do not install asbestos brake pads, one of the largest categories of asbestos containing products imported into Canada is after-market brake pads. Canada imported more than $100-million in asbestos brake pads and linings between 2005 and 2015. Imports of asbestos containing brake pads into Canada continue to increase unabated.

On April 5th 2016 the Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change promulgated regulations requiring automotive recyclers to recycle ELV to set environmental standards. These standards include the removal of asbestos brake pads prior to compaction of vehicle hulks in preparation for shipment to metals recyclers.

Steve Fletcher, Managing Director of the Automotive Recyclers of Canada notes, “For an auto recycler there is no way to know whether a brake pad contains asbestos or not. In Ontario, every pad will need to be removed and where the recycler encounters an asbestos brake pad there is inevitably going to be some release of asbestos particulate into the air.” adding, “Today’s announcement is a tremendous step forward in protecting the health of workers that dismantle and recycle ELV. This policy change could not have come soon enough.”

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**About the Automotive Recyclers of Canada**

The Automotive Recyclers of Canada represents over 400 vehicle recyclers and dismantlers from across Canada. ARC members collectively recycle an average of 400,000 vehicles each year thereby avoiding over 1 million metric tonnes of greenhouse gases associated with producing metals from raw materials.

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