



YOUR SAFETY Department
— SAFETY Solutions —

ASBESTOS AWARENESS

Asbestos is a naturally occurring fibrous mineral with high tensile strength, the ability to be woven, and resistance to heat and most chemicals.

SOURCES OF EXPOSURE

Asbestos fibers may be found in building materials and manufactured goods like countertops, roofing shingles, ceiling and floor tiles, mastic, paper and cement products, adhesives, textiles, gaskets, coatings, fire proofing, insulation and friction products such as automobile clutch, brake and transmission parts.

The only way to identify asbestos-containing materials (ACM) is through microscopic analysis.

ASBESTOS HAZARDS

When ACM are damaged or disturbed by repair, remodelling or demolition activities, fibers become airborne and can be inhaled into the lungs, where they can cause significant health problems. Once lodged in the lungs, they remain there for life.

The friability of a product is its ability to release fibers into the air when disturbed. Asbestos materials are usually considered non-friable when bound. Asbestos becomes friable when sawed, drilled or otherwise damaged. Friable asbestos may be a health risk while undisturbed non-friable asbestos do not pose health risks.

ASBESTOSIS

- This occurs when fibers accumulate in the lungs. They cause permanent scarring resulting in shortness of breath and an increased susceptibility to dangerous lung infections.

LUNG CANCER

- Asbestos is a known carcinogen. Lung cancer is a serious threat to those who have been heavily exposed to asbestos.

MESOTHELIOMA

- This is a rare form of cancer that is found in the membrane lining the chest or abdominal cavity.

EXPOSURE LIMITS

If you do not have national requirements for asbestos exposure you can be guided by the United States OSHA limits below:

- Permissible Exposure Limit (PEL) over an eight hour time weighted average of 0.1 fiber per cubic centimeter (fpcf) of air





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- Excursion Limit (EL) is a 30 minute short term exposure limit of 1.0 fpc

SAFE WORKING PRACTICES

Only qualified or licensed workers should handle suspected ACM. Similarly, only certified personnel or licensed Asbestos Abatement Professionals can work with ACM.

If you are unsure if airborne asbestos fibers are present, notify your supervisor and stop activities until more information is available or the situation has been remedied.

Engineering practices are required to maintain exposure levels below the stated permissible limits. These include:

- Isolating the source
- Negative pressure ventilation
- Exhaust and vacuum systems equipped with HEPA filters
- Use of wet methods-Wetting down materials creates wet fibers that are less likely to float in the air.



WARNING LABELS

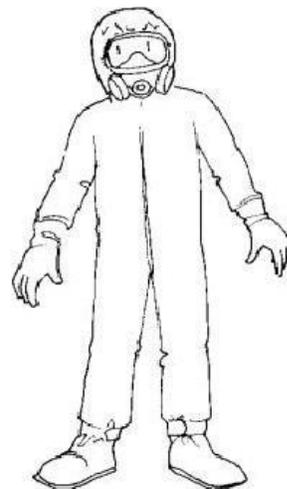
Areas where airborne asbestos fibers are present must be regulated and clearly marked with warning signs.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) FOR ABATEMENT

The following PPE is required when airborne asbestos is present or when contact contamination is likely.

Protective clothing that covers the whole body is required. This includes:

- Coveralls made from material that is impervious to asbestos fibers, such as Tyvek.
- Head covering
- Foot coverings
- Goggles or face shield
- Gloves
- Air-purifying respirator with HEPA (high efficiency particulate air) filter

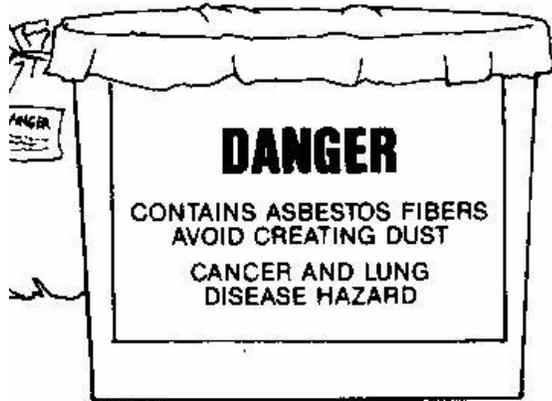




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Head, foot and hand coverings that are not integral with the coveralls must be adequately taped to prevent the possibility of asbestos fibers coming into contact with the skin.

Discard disposable clothing appropriately and ensure that all-reusable equipment, including your respirator is fully cleaned, dried and properly stored.



WASTE DISPOSAL

Containers of asbestos material, such as waste bins or bags must be impermeable and also labelled with warning signs.

Upon disposal, waste bins should be closed and waste bags sealed.

CONCLUSION

- Be aware of and respect the hazards that exposure to friable asbestos poses.
- Do not disturb suspected asbestos-containing materials unless qualified to do so.

- Ensure qualified/licensed personnel comply with all regulations and follow safe working practices to protect themselves and others.

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

Asbestosis is the heart
of mesothelioma safety.

