



ASBESTOS GUIDE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

TABLE OF CONTENT

1. INTRODUCTION
2. WHAT IS ASBESTOS?
3. WHAT IS ASBESTOS USED FOR?
4. IS THERE ASBESTOS IN MY WORKPLACE?
List of NPF workplaces with asbestos
5. WHAT ARE THE CONCERNS ABOUT ASBESTOS?
6. HOW DO I PROTECT MYSELF?
Exposure
Reporting procedures
7. WHERE CAN I GET ADDITIONAL INFORMATION?

INTRODUCTION

Everyone knows that exposure to asbestos dust can pose health risks.

Do you know where you can find asbestos?

Do you know the conditions where there is a risk of exposure to fibersasbestos?

Are you aware of the precautions to be taken and the means of protection to be used?

The following information will answer many of your questions.



WHAT IS ASBESTOS?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral known for its remarkable strength and resistance to heat.

Manufacturers have added asbestos to products to help insulation and fireproofing. It is most commonly found in construction materials used to build many older homes and public buildings.

WHAT IS ASBESTOS USED FOR?

Here are a few familiar items that may contain asbestos:

- Floor tiles
- Ceiling tiles



- Boilers and pipe insulation

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Asbestos_pipe_insulation.jpg | https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Basement_asbestos_boiler.jpg



As well as:

- Some stucco
- Dry wall
- Insulation
- Caulking

IS THERE ASBESTOS IN MY WORKPLACE?

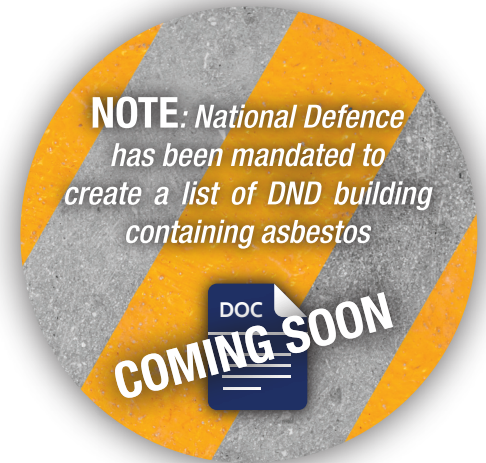
Public and commercial building owners should keep an inventory of asbestos-containing materials to inform workers, tenants, authorities and contractors. Ask your supervisor whether asbestos is present in your work area.

People may be exposed to asbestos when renovation or demolition activities are occurring.

Small asbestos fibres can be released into the air **when**:

- Disturbing or removing insulation including insulation around hot water pipes and tanks.
- Removing or disturbing roofing shingles and felt or siding.
- Sanding, breaking apart or scraping asbestos floor tiles.
- Breaking apart soundproofing ceiling tiles.
- Sanding or disturbing plaster, including acoustical plaster.
- Sanding or scraping older surface treatments, such as roofing compounds (including tar paper), spackling, sealants, paint, putty, caulking or drywall.

A list of federally owned buildings can be found at:
***National inventory of asbestos in Public Services
and Procurement Canada buildings***



WHAT ARE THE CONCERNS ABOUT ASBESTOS? WHAT ARE THE HEALTH RISKS OF EXPOSURE?

Asbestos poses health risks only when the fibres become airborne and are inhaled by a person. If the asbestos fibres are bound tightly together, such as in commercial materials like floor or ceiling tiles and siding, Health Canada considers that there are no significant health risks.

Exposure health risks depend on factors such as:

- Concentration of asbestos fibres in the air
- Duration of exposure
- Frequency of exposure
- Size of the asbestos particles inhaled
- Amount of time since the initial exposure

HOW DO I PROTECT MYSELF?

Medical experts agree that non-friable asbestos-containing materials pose no significant health risk unless they are being drilled, ground, broken, sanded or otherwise worked on.

Do not disturb materials containing asbestos yourself.

This action increases the risk of exposure. If you are unsure whether friable materials contain asbestos or not, do not touch it and contact your supervisor immediately.

Any damage to materials containing asbestos should be reported to the appropriate authority.

If the building where you work has been identified as containing asbestos and there is a chance that the construction, renovation or maintenance procedures might disturb the material, the work area must be hermetically separated from the rest of the workplace by walls or other suitable means.

WHAT KIND OF PROTECTION SHOULD I USE IF THERE ARE RENOVATIONS OR CONSTRUCTIONS BEING CARRIED OUT IN MY BUILDING?

Construction workers who do (or may) come into direct contact with the asbestos containing materials are trained for this scenario and wear the required personal protective equipment. Other workers and employees working on or

visiting the building do not need to wear any personal protection equipment as the work area must be hermetically separated from the building

REPORTING PROCEDURES

If you have observed an asbestos-containing material that has deteriorated, or has been disturbed, it must be reported to your supervisor. Any hazards, whether asbestos-related or not, must be reported to your supervisor.

SCENARIO

Joanne walked into work this Monday morning and as she unlocked the door, she realized there was a strong musty smell.

She put her personal belonging down on her desk and began to explore the building. As she progressed down the hall, the smell was getting stronger and stronger. Finally, she opened the last door of the hallway to find a room in disarray.

The pipes in the ceiling seemed to have burst during the weekend. The ceiling tiles were broken on the floor. The drywall was soaked and torn in several places and some of the ducts had broken and fallen on the floor scattering the insulation typically around those ducts.

WHAT SHOULD JOANNE DO?

Answer:

Avoid touching anything, close the door and contact her supervisor who in turn should contact her supervisor as soon as possible to inform him or her of the situation.

She could contact the Senior Local Employer Representatives directly given the urgency or even the BGSO (Base General Safety Officer) if her supervisor cannot be reached quickly.

She should leave the premises, make her way to a safe place and await further instructions.

WHERE CAN I GET ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON ASBESTOS?



<http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/chemicals/asbestos/whatis.html>

Health Canada

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada>



THINK SAFETY