

Asbestos is present in many products, including heat and acoustic insulation, fireproofing, roofing and flooring materials. It is a mineral made up of tiny fibers that can be easily inhaled. When asbestos-containing materials are damaged or disturbed, the dust-like fibers can easily spread throughout a building and can cause serious lung problems with prolonged or acute exposure.

Asbestos-containing materials are only dangerous when they are disturbed or handled incorrectly. If asbestos-containing materials are not handled properly, asbestos particles can be breathed in. Even a small amount of asbestos-containing materials can cause health effects. The federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Health Department have specific for the maintenance, renovation and demolition of buildings and other structures.

Vermont Regulations for Asbestos Control

The Health Department's Asbestos and Lead Regulatory Program (ALRP) administers the state's asbestos program. The Vermont Regulations for Asbestos Control are designed to prevent human exposure to asbestos hazards, and to cover identification and assessment of asbestos-containing materials as well as the clean-up, repair and removal of regulated asbestos-containing materials associated with buildings and construction projects. Under Vermont law, only trained and licensed contractors are allowed to perform asbestos abatement/removal activities, must apply for a permit for most asbestos-related activities, and must follow the regulations regarding the safe handling and disposal of asbestos-containing materials.

Vermont law states that no one may renovate or demolish a building or other structure without first getting confirmation from the owner that an asbestos assessment has been completed by a Vermont-licensed asbestos inspector.

If the licensed asbestos inspector finds no asbestos-containing materials, the owner must notify the Health Department within 10 working days before the demolition begins. The Health Department does not need to be notified of renovation work if no asbestos-containing materials are found.

If the licensed asbestos inspector does identify asbestos-containing materials, and these materials will be disturbed due to the renovation or demolition, then the asbestos-containing materials must be removed by a Vermont-licensed asbestos abatement entity before the renovation or demolition. The asbestos abatement contractor must notify the Health Department at least 10 working days before the project begins by filing an application for a permit.

KEY POINTS

- **Asbestos is a naturally occurring fibrous mineral used in many building materials**
- **Asbestos-containing materials are only dangerous when they are disturbed during renovation or demolition, or handled incorrectly.**
- **The ALRP may request that the THO conduct a preliminary site visit for fact-finding purposes**

Role of the Town Health Officer

The ALRP receives many calls from the public regarding demolitions, the illegal removal of asbestos material and concerns about asbestos-containing materials that are in poor condition. At times, the ALRP may request that the THO conduct a preliminary site visit for fact-finding purposes, e.g. to confirm that demolition or renovation work is being done and collect information about the property owner and/or contractors.

Although THOs are not necessarily qualified to identify asbestos-containing materials, after a preliminary site visit, they can consult with staff from the Asbestos and Lead Regulatory Program to discuss their site-specific observations and facts to determine any next steps to be taken locally or through the Asbestos and Lead Regulatory Program.

Sample list of Suspect Asbestos Containing Materials

This list does not include every product or material that may contain asbestos.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cement Pipes ○ Cement Wallboard ○ Cement Siding ○ Asphalt Floor Tile ○ Vinyl Floor Tile ○ Vinyl Sheet Flooring ○ Flooring Backing ○ Construction Mastics ○ Acoustical Plaster ○ Decorative Plaster ○ Textured Paints/Coatings ○ Ceiling Tiles and Lay-in Panels ○ Spray-Applied Insulation ○ Exterior Asbestos Cement Siding ○ Exterior Asbestos Roofing Materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fireproofing Materials ○ Taping Compounds (thermal) ○ Packing Materials (walls/floors) ○ High Temperature Gaskets ○ Laboratory Hoods/Tabletops ○ Laboratory Gloves ○ Fire Blankets ○ Fire Curtains ○ Elevator Equipment Panels ○ Elevator Brake Shoes ○ HVAC Duct Insulation ○ Boiler Insulation ○ Breeching Insulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ductwork Flexible Fabric ○ Pipe Insulation ○ Heating and Electrical Ducts ○ Electrical Cloth Insulation ○ Chalkboards ○ Roofing Shingles/Felt/Flashing ○ Thermal Paper Products ○ Fire Doors ○ Caulking/Putties ○ Adhesives ○ Joint Compounds ○ Vinyl Wall Coverings ○ Spackling Compounds ○ Exterior Asbestos Transite Board ○ Exterior Asbestos Cement Piping ○ Vinyl Asbestos Floor Tile and Mastics
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References:

Information about regulatory compliance requirements and public education/outreach materials is available [on the Health Department's website](#). The Health Department also has [a recorded training for Town Health Officers on asbestos available online](#).

For questions or more information, contact the Asbestos and Lead Regulatory Program at 800-439-8550 or ALRP@vermont.gov.