

# Hiring an Asbestos Contractor

How do I hire an asbestos contractor to do work in my home?

The process of selecting an asbestos contractor to remove asbestos from your home may seem daunting. This fact sheet can help you gather information and will allow you to come to an informed decision before you hire an asbestos contractor. Some factors to consider are the costs associated with asbestos removal and the work performance of the contractor. As with any work you contract to have done in your home, some caution should be used when selecting a contractor.

When I'm selecting an asbestos contractor, are there any particular questions I should ask?

As when hiring any contractor, the more information you have about a contractor may help you make a more informed decision when it comes to hiring one. Here are some questions you should ask before hiring an asbestos contractor:

## **Are you licensed by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) as an asbestos contractor?**

State law requires that all asbestos contractors have a license to perform asbestos-related work in single-family residences and residential buildings where the quantity of friable asbestos-containing material to be removed is greater than six square feet, ten linear feet or one cubic foot. Request a copy of their license or contact the Asbestos Program to verify their license.

## **How much will the asbestos removal cost and what does the cost include?**

The costs associated with asbestos removal can vary based on the size of the project, the amount of asbestos being removed, and the time required to perform the removal. Costs should include labor, air monitoring and waste disposal. The cost can be higher or lower based on how complicated the project is.

## **Can you provide references from customers you have done similar asbestos work for?**

The contractor should be able to provide you with several references. You should select at least three of the references you would like to contact. Ask former customers if they were satisfied with the work and whether or not the contractor completed the project as agreed upon.

Is there any other information I should request from the asbestos contractor?

It is recommended that you obtain bids from more than one contractor, rather than accepting a single bid from one contractor. Be sure to describe the project to each contractor in exactly the same terms, so you can compare bids. Ask each contractor to include a listing of all associated costs such as labor, materials, insurance, bonding, air monitoring costs, and asbestos waste disposal fees. A contractor who comes to your home to look at the anticipated work will give you the most realistic bid.

Request a written work plan from each contractor submitting a bid. The work plan should include a description of the removal and clean up methods to be used. The work plan gives you a chance to better compare the services you will receive as part of the bid.



Indoor Environments and Radiation Section  
625 Robert Street North, PO Box 64975  
St. Paul, MN 55164-0975  
(651) 201-4620  
[www.health.state.mn.us](http://www.health.state.mn.us)

Have the contractor show you how the work plan follows state and federal regulations.

Request that the contractor provide you with copies of the following documentation:

- Minnesota asbestos contractors license
- Minnesota certifications for site supervisors and workers at the site
- The permit issued by MDH
- Waste manifest records
- Laboratory report for the air sampling results

How will they do the work?

Prior to beginning the removal, have the contractor show you how the work area has been set up. Have them explain the process they are going to use to remove the asbestos. Contractors should never use any of your personal property, such as tools, hoses, vacuums or mops for the project.

Here is a short list of what you should see before and during the removal project:

- All non-contaminated moveable objects should be removed from the work area. Items such as paint cans, bicycles, storage boxes, tools, toys etc. should be moved out of the work area before the contractor begins setting up the work area. You can do this yourself, or the contractor should do it. There may be extra fees for this activity.
- Plastic sheeting on walls and floors isolating the work area from the rest of the basement or house; this is known as the containment or enclosure
- A 3-chambered decontamination unit equipped with a working shower that is connected to the work area; this is known as a "decon"

- A HEPA filter equipped negative air machine, known as a HEPA unit, which creates negative air pressure within the containment to keep airborne asbestos fibers from leaving the containment.
- An airless sprayer to keep the asbestos-containing material wet during the removal process.
- Air sample pumps collecting air samples during the removal of asbestos
- Workers wearing personal protective equipment (respirators and protective suits) and using the decontamination unit when entering and exiting the work area.
- Asbestos material being taken out of the containment in sealed plastic bags.

How do I get more information?

For more information about asbestos, contact the Asbestos Program at MDH. You can call us at (651) 201-4620, visit our website at [www.health.state.mn.us/asbestos](http://www.health.state.mn.us/asbestos) or write us at the address on the front of this handout.

The Minnesota Department of Commerce provides consumer information and services as well as contractor licensing and enforcement actions. Contact (651)-296-4026 or [www.commerce.state.mn.us](http://www.commerce.state.mn.us) for further information.

The Better Business Bureau has information regarding business practices or consumer praise/complaints about an asbestos contractor. Contact (651) 699-1111 or [www.mnd.bbb.org](http://www.mnd.bbb.org) for further information.

This handout was developed as a summary of MDH regulations. It does not cover all situations or conditions and is not to be used as a substitute for the Minnesota Statutes and Rules. Additional federal, state and local regulations may apply.

If you require this document in another format such as large print, Braille, or cassette tape, contact 651-201-5000 or 1-800-657-3908. For deaf or hard of hearing TTY: 651-201-5797