

Quick Tips: Asbestos

WHAT IS ASBESTOS?

Asbestos is a natural mineral fiber and is mined out of the ground. Asbestos is resistant to chemicals and it does not burn. Asbestos has been used in many products and building materials. When asbestos cracks or is broken up, tiny fibers can be released into the air.

Protect yourself from asbestos

Asbestos can become breathable if it is broken up or crumbly. Asbestos fibers can get into your lungs when breathed. Asbestos can cause lung scarring and cancers. There is no known safe amount of asbestos that you can breathe.

Look for asbestos

Look for asbestos labels. Not all asbestos has a label. Asbestos can be found in many things. Asbestos can be in glues, cement board, siding, insulation, caulk, plaster, sheetrock, roofing, vinyl and linoleum flooring and many other things.

Put up asbestos warning signs

If you know a building has asbestos and it is already down, warning signs should be put up to protect people.

An asbestos removal company may have to get rid of the asbestos waste. Asbestos removal companies are licensed by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH).

To check on a company, visit the MDH website at: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/asbestos> or by phone at 651-201-4620.

Get help with asbestos

If you own your own home, you can legally fix and take out asbestos from your home. This work can be dangerous to your health. It is best to get help from an asbestos company.

Take out asbestos before tearing down a building

Any asbestos waste that will break into pieces should be taken out before a building is taken down. Hiring an asbestos company for this is safest. If it won't come off or if it is not removed, all the waste may have to be taken away to a special dump, called an asbestos landfill.

Get rid of asbestos properly

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has a list of asbestos landfills. They are the only places that can take asbestos. The MPCA can be reached at 651-296-6300 or on the web at www.pca.state.mn.us/programs/asbestos_p.html

MDH Environmental Health flood information

Website: www.health.state.mn.us/floods

MDH Environmental Health contacts

www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/contacts

MDH DISTRICT OFFICES

- Bemidji 218-308-2100
- Duluth 218-302-6166
- Fergus Falls 218-332-5150
- Mankato 507-344-2700
- Marshall 507-476-4220
- Metro 651-201-4500
- Rochester 507-206-2700
- St. Cloud 320-223-7300

Asbestos

Asbestos and Lead Compliance:

651-201-4620

Email: health.asbestos-lead@state.mn.us

Websites: www.health.state.mn.us/asbestos

www.health.state.mn.us/lead

Carbon monoxide and mold

MDH Indoor Air Quality:

651-201-4601 or 800-798-9050

E-mail: health.indoorair@state.mn.us

Website: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/air

Cleaning up and food safety

MDH Food, Pools, and Lodging:

651-201-4500

E-mail: health.foodlodging@state.mn.us

Website: www.health.state.mn.us/foodsafety

Public drinking water

MDH Drinking Water Protection:

651-201-4700

E-mail: health.drinkingwater@state.mn.us

Website: www.health.state.mn.us/water

Wells and well water

MDH Well Management:

651-201-4600 or 800-383-9808

E-mail: health.wells@state.mn.us

Website: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/wells

To obtain this information in a different format, call 651-201-5000 or 1-800-657-3908

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