

ASBESTOS

What is Asbestos?

Asbestos is a general term for a number of naturally occurring fibrous minerals. There are many kinds of asbestos. In the past, asbestos was used in a variety of items because it is strong, durable, fireproof, and a good insulator. Asbestos was used in many building products.



Insulation



Friable

Shingles



Non-friable

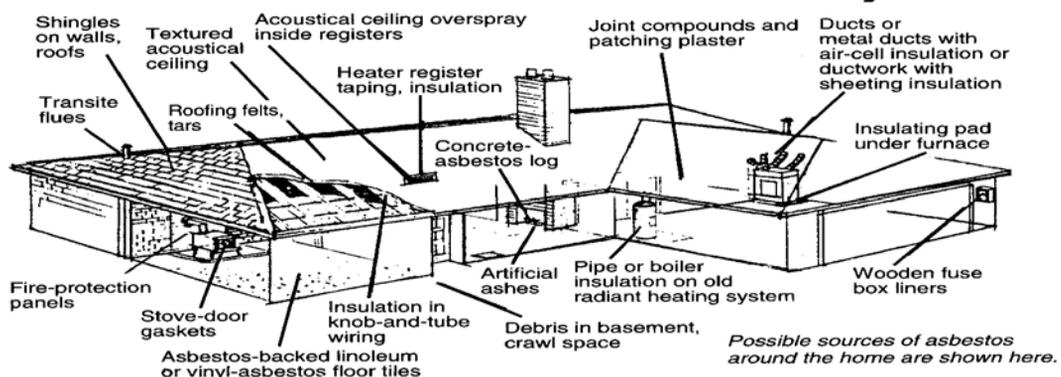
Asbestos Containing Materials

Asbestos containing materials (ACM) can be described as **friable** or **non-friable**. ACM that can be crushed by hand is called **friable**. ACM that cannot be crushed by hand is called **non-friable**.

Many building materials in use before 1980 contained asbestos. The only way to tell if something contains asbestos is to have it tested by a qualified laboratory.

Where is Asbestos Found ?

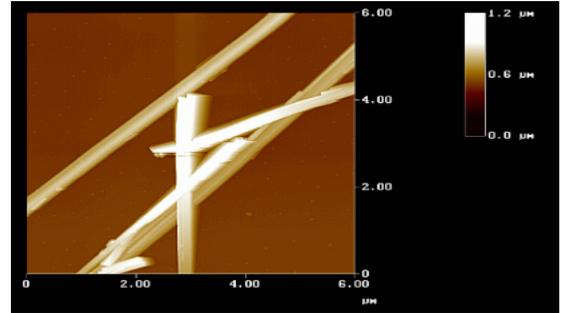
Places Where Asbestos Is Commonly Found



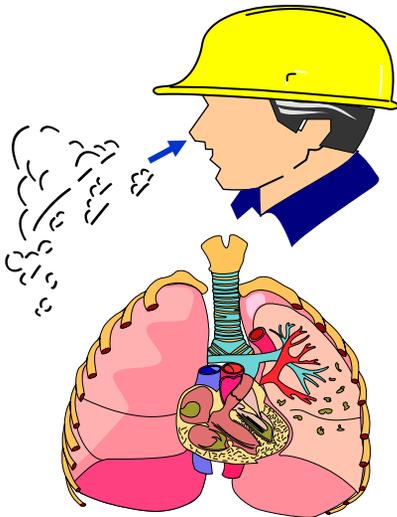
Most products made today do not contain asbestos. The law requires that those few products that still do contain asbestos must be labeled.

HEALTH EFFECTS OF ASBESTOS

Asbestos containing materials (ACM) become a health concern only if damaged. Damaged ACM may release very small fibers that can be inhaled deep into the lungs. These small fibers are much more likely to be released from **friable** ACM (pipe insulation/plaster) than from **non-friable** ACM (floor tile/roof shingles).



Asbestos Fibers
1μm = .00004 inch



Breathing high levels of asbestos fibers can lead to scarring of the lungs, lung cancer, and/or Mesothelioma (cancer of the lining of the chest and abdominal cavity). Health risks increase with the number of fibers inhaled. Symptoms of asbestos related disease usually do not appear for 10-30 years after exposure.



Points to Remember



- ☒ **Asbestos related diseases usually occur when high concentrations of fibers have been inhaled over a relatively long period of time (workplace exposures).**
- ☒ **Almost all cases of asbestos related lung cancers occur in people who also smoked cigarettes.**
- ☒ **People exposed to small amounts of asbestos rarely have health problems.**

ASBESTOS IN THE HOME

Asbestos containing materials (ACM) are safe unless fibers are released and inhaled into the lungs.

Homes Built Before 1980

- ☒ Have suspected ACM tested by a qualified laboratory before beginning any remodeling project.
- ☒ Never saw, grind, or drill holes in ACM.



Preventing Exposure in the Home

- ☒ If the ACM is in good condition, do not disturb it.
- ☒ Check ACM regularly for damage.
- ☒ Take every precaution to avoid damaging ACM.
- ☒ If the ACM is damaged, contact a licensed professional to have it repaired or removed.
- ☒ Do not dust, sweep, or vacuum areas that may contain asbestos. Use wet cleaning methods.

Asbestos removal and repair should be done by a licensed professional trained and qualified in handling asbestos.

