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# ENVIRONMENTAL Fact Sheet

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## Asbestos: What Homeowners, Contractors, Property Managers and Landlords Need to Know

It is widely known that exposure to airborne asbestos fibers is hazardous to human health and wellbeing. Federal law authorizes the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and U.S. Occupational Health and Safety Agency (OSHA) to enact and enforce federal regulations in 40 CFR Part 61, 29 CFR 1910.1001 and 29 CFR 1926.1101 to protect workers, the general public and the environment against asbestos hazards. NHDES is authorized by RSA 141-E and Env-A 1800, *Asbestos Management and Control*, to protect the environment and the public by ensuring that asbestos is managed in a manner that prevents the release of asbestos fibers to the environment.



### **What building materials contain asbestos?**

Prior to the identification of the health hazards associated with its use, asbestos was widely believed to be a safe and valuable natural mineral resource that added very important physical properties to the materials to which it was added. By adding asbestos fibers to products, manufacturers were able to make their products more fire retardant, heat resistant, heat absorptive, nonconductive and chemically resistant while adding greater tensile strength.

While asbestos is no longer used in product manufacturing in the United States, many other countries still use asbestos in the manufacture of products that are imported into this country. In addition to imported products, many asbestos-containing building materials (ACBM) remain in residential and commercial buildings throughout the United States.

## List of Commonly Encountered Asbestos-Containing Building Materials

### Mastics and Adhesives

- Construction mastics.
- Roof patching cement.
- Roofing tar.
- Window glazing.
- Caulking compounds.
- Black mastic (under vinyl floor tiles).
- Foundation coatings and water proofing.
- Glue daubs.

### Vinyl Asbestos Products

- Floor tile.
- Baseboard flashing and cove base.
- Vinyl sheet flooring.
- Felt backing on sheet flooring.

### Thermal System Insulation (TSI)

- Pipe insulation (corrugated air-cell).
- Elbow packing (plaster/mud).
- Boiler packing (plaster/mud).
- Fire box liner (fiber mat).
- Rope gasket  
(fire box door and between boiler sections).
- Sealants, gaskets and caulking.
- Transite insulation panels.
- Air-cell insulation panels.

### Fire and Heat Resistant Surface Coatings (for structural steel)

- Spray-applied insulation.
- Blown-in insulation.

### Attic and Wall Cavity Insulation

- Vermiculite.

### Transite Pipe (Cement Pipes)

- Asbestos cement pipes  
(Municipal Water Systems).
- Heating and electrical ducts.

### Soundproofing

- Ceiling panels (drop ceiling type).

### Transite Products (Cement Board)

- Wall and roof board.
- Fake brick panels.
- Siding tiles.
- Roof tiles.
- Roof flashing.
- Laboratory countertops and hoods.
- Electrical panel partitions.
- Fire door cores.

### Plaster and Joint Compounds

- Decorative ceiling plaster (popcorn).
- Drywall panel.
- Drywall compound.
- Spackles and skim coating plaster.

### Asbestos Containing Cloth

- Laboratory gloves.
- Fire blankets.
- Firefighter gear.
- Fire curtains (in public venues).
- Electrical cloth.
- Architectural finishings (in public venues).

### Asphaltic Materials

- Rolled roofing.
- Roofing shingles.

### Asbestos Containing Paper Products (Friable)

- Compounding tape.
- Heavy construction felts and papers.
- Duct wrap and tape.

### Paints & Coatings

- Water and heat resistant paints  
(often silver on mobile home roofs).

### Other

- Electric wiring insulation.
- Chalkboards (in schools).

### **What steps can I take to minimize the risk of exposure to asbestos?**

The renovation or demolition of a building can pose a substantial risk of disturbance of ACBM, which would in turn expose workers, residents and the general public to airborne asbestos fibers. To manage and mitigate that risk, specific asbestos management requirements must be complied with when undertaking renovation and demolition activities or managing commercial or residential properties in New Hampshire. Familiarizing yourself with RSA 141-E and Env-A 1800 before commencing with any renovation or demolition activity will help you to comply with the applicable requirements while ensuring the health and safety of everyone involved. In addition, you protect yourself and your company from potentially significant financial liabilities, as well as potential enforcement actions that could arise from violations of RSA 141-E and Env-A 1800.

Choosing a reputable, professional and knowledgeable general contractor is a critical first step for any project. Your contractor should be aware of, and comply with, all laws and rules that pertain to their areas of business operation, including asbestos. Be on your guard against amateur, ill-informed or disreputable contractors who do not operate in accordance with existing laws, local permitting requirements, construction codes and industry best practices. Please be advised that both *the property owner* and the *contractor* are responsible for complying with asbestos-related laws and rules, and both may be subject to orders, penalties, or other enforcement actions for failing to comply with those laws and rules.

### **When is an asbestos inspection required?**

Once the design of your project has been determined, a qualified asbestos inspector must be hired to survey the proposed project areas for the presence of ACBM that would be subject to disturbance during the project. Only persons who have received the required training covering the identification of asbestos-containing materials (ACM), and the hazards associated with them, are qualified under Env-A 1802.14 to conduct the required inspections. The qualified inspector will conduct a visual inspection of the project area and take samples for laboratory analysis of all materials that are suspected of containing asbestos. Upon receiving the sample results back from the lab, the inspector will prepare a written report detailing the inspection findings along with a list of all known, or assumed, ACBM.

### **When do I need to notify NHDES about an asbestos abatement project?**

A written notification must be received by NHDES and the local health officer at least 10 business days before most asbestos abatement projects occur in New Hampshire. See the "Asbestos Abatement Project Requirements" table below. The notification for demolition projects must be submitted even when no ACBM were identified during the required asbestos inspection.

Asbestos abatement activities can involve:

- The wrecking or removal of any load-supporting structural member containing or covered by regulated asbestos-containing materials (RACM).
- The encapsulation, coating, binding or resurfacing of structural members, walls, ceilings, or building or equipment surfaces, or ducts, pipes, boilers, tanks, reactors, furnaces, or other vessels containing RACM.
- The construction of airtight enclosures to isolate surfaces coated or containing RACM.
- The removal or stripping of RACM from structural members, walls, ceilings, or other building surfaces, or ducts, pipes, boilers, tanks, reactors, furnaces, or other vessels.
- The repair of RACM to minimize the likelihood of fiber release from damaged areas to include the application of; duct tape, re-wet able glass cloth, canvas, cement, or other materials intended to seal exposed and or damaged areas from which asbestos fibers may be released.

RACM is friable ACM, which can be crumbled, pulverized or reduced to powder by hand pressure, or non-friable ACM that has become friable, or is likely to become crumbled, pulverized, or reduced to powder by the forces expected to act upon it.

### Asbestos Abatement Project Requirements

Project Type	Requirements
Major asbestos abatement project (more than 10 linear feet, 25 square feet or 3 cubic feet of RACM).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Written notification at least 10 days before project begins.</li> <li>2. New Hampshire licensed asbestos abatement contractor.</li> <li>3. New Hampshire certified asbestos abatement supervisors and workers.</li> </ol>
Minor asbestos abatement project (10 linear feet, 25 square feet or 3 cubic feet or less of RACM).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. New Hampshire certified asbestos abatement supervisors and workers.</li> </ol>
Small scale short duration project (less than 3 linear feet or 3 square feet of RACM).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Boiler service workers and facility maintenance workers.</li> <li>2. Purpose to perform needed repairs or service.</li> <li>3. Worker received the required OSHA initial, and annual refresher, asbestos awareness training for the OSHA classification of asbestos disturbance activity to be performed.</li> </ol>
Demolition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Written notification at least 10 days before project begins.</li> </ol>

#### **What action do I need to take for damaged or disturbed asbestos?**

RSA 141-E requires owners and operators of commercial and residential rental properties to maintain all areas of a building which are accessible to occupants free of asbestos inhalation hazards above the applicable permissible exposure limit for the type of use or occupancy of that building, as established by OSHA/NIOSH. Any ACBMs located in common areas, rental units, work areas or tenant accessible areas that are damaged, or are likely to become damaged, have to be abated by a New Hampshire licensed asbestos abatement contractor to eliminate potential asbestos exposure hazards.

#### **What are the disposal and documentation requirements for asbestos projects?**

Within 30 days of the completion of asbestos abatement activities, all asbestos waste must be transported for delivery to a solid waste facility that is permitted to receive it. Currently, the only facilities in New Hampshire that are permitted to accept asbestos waste are:

- Mount Carberry Landfill, 1222 Hutchins Street, Berlin NH 03570, (603) 752-3342 (asbestos waste only accepted from commercial haulers and asbestos abatement contractors).

- Turnkey Landfill, 90 Rochester Neck Rd, Rochester, NH 03839, (216) 286-0230 (asbestos waste only accepted from commercial haulers and asbestos abatement contractors).
- Four Hills Landfill, 840 W. Hollis Street, Nashua, NH 03062, (603) 589-3412 (asbestos waste only accepted from commercial haulers and Nashua residents).

All transporters of asbestos waste must provide NHDES with transport and disposal notification. In all instances where greater than 10 linear feet, 25 square feet or 3 cubic feet of asbestos waste is disposed of, a waste shipment record must be sent to NHDES within 30 days of the delivery of the asbestos waste to the permitted disposal facility.

### **What is the single-family owner occupant exemption?**

The owner who occupies a private, single-family dwelling may perform asbestos abatement activities on or in their residence. However, the owner must personally perform the work; and cannot rent or sell the residence within six months after completing the abatement activity. Owners who perform asbestos abatement activities are exempt from the abatement notification requirement; however, the owner must still comply with each of the following:

- Adequately wet the ACM before removal, and maintain it wet during and after removal, and until it is placed into leak-tight containers for disposal.
- Remove all ACM that is not associated with structural members in small sections.
- Cause minimum breakage by carefully lowering all ACM to the ground or floor.
- Not allow asbestos waste to accumulate on the floor.
- Place wet asbestos waste into water-tight containers, or double impermeable bags of at least six mil thickness each, or dumpsters with two ten mil liners.
- Seal bags, containers or Dumpster liners when fully loaded.
- Wrap large components or structural members that were removed intact with two layers of six mil sheeting and then seal the sheeting.
- Perform cleanup procedures using repeated HEPA vacuuming and wet cleaning techniques until no visible residue remains in the work area.

When a homeowner completes asbestos abatement activities and is ready to dispose of asbestos waste offsite, NHDES recommends the homeowner contact an asbestos abatement contractor for small quantities (one to 20 bags) or a commercial waste company for larger volumes for assistance with the documentation and disposal of the waste.

If a homeowner transports asbestos waste to a permitted disposal facility, the homeowner must provide written notification to NHDES, as well as retain a copy of the notice for their own records.

For more information on the potential health hazards of handling ACM, and how to minimize your exposure, go to the [NHDES Asbestos Management website](#), or contact NHDES by email at [asbestos@des.nh.gov](mailto:asbestos@des.nh.gov) or by telephone at [\(603\) 271-1373](tel:6032711373).