

safety matters

Property Management

Toolbox Talks

From your safety partners at **Crendon Insurance Brokers Ltd**

The Dangers of Asbestos Inhalation

Even though most uses of asbestos have been banned, it can still be found in a variety of products, such as building materials. The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 creates procedures and requirements that apply to all work involving asbestos materials. While most of the requirements remain unchanged from the 2006 version, there are a few additional requirements for non-licensed work with asbestos, including notification, medical surveillance and record keeping. Employees need to follow all asbestos regulations because they can be exposed to this hazardous material in residential and commercial buildings, and during renovations and demolitions of properties.

The inhalation of asbestos fibres can cause serious damage to the lungs and other organs that may not appear until years after exposure. Asbestos fibres associated with these health risks are too small to be seen with the naked eye, and smokers are at a higher risk for developing asbestos-related diseases if exposed.

Avoid Asbestos Inhalation

The following tips are basic safety reminders for those who work near or with asbestos-containing materials:

- If you suspect that asbestos is present in an area that is not designated as an asbestos workspace, leave the area immediately and tell your supervisor.
- Never enter an asbestos-regulated area unless you possess the proper clearance.
- If you are not wearing appropriate respiratory protection, do not enter an asbestos-regulated area.
- Do not eat, smoke, drink, chew gum or apply cosmetics in an asbestos-regulated area.

- Read and obey all warning signs displayed in asbestos regulated areas.
- When working with asbestos, keep the material wet and vacuum the dust using an approved HEPA vacuum. Immediately collect and close all waste in bags designed for asbestos.

Protect Yourself

- Always wear required protective clothing such as coveralls or similar full-body clothing, head coverings, gloves and foot coverings when working with asbestos. Face shields, goggles and other protective equipment are also necessary.
- Make sure you receive proper training and medical clearance if your work requires use of a respirator for asbestos protection. Use the correct type of respirator for the level of exposure.
- Follow all required hygiene and decontamination practices after working with asbestos.
- Leave your work clothes and shoes at work and wash them at work if they are not disposable. Family members of employees exposed to asbestos can get ill from asbestos taken home on an employee's clothing or shoes. If required, shower at work after working with asbestos.

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