



## ***Facts about* Asbestos for Local Governments**

Asbestos, a naturally-occurring mineral fiber, is used in more than 3,000 different construction materials and manufacturing products. It is commonly found in electrical equipment, vinyl flooring, cement shake siding, roof shingles, and insulation.

While asbestos may pose little danger if left alone, the demolition or renovation of a structure containing asbestos can cause serious problems. Asbestos breaks down into tiny fibers that can become trapped in lung tissue. Up to 30 years after inhalation, those fibers can cause cancer.

When a city or town agency has undertaken the ownership, control or supervision of a demolition or renovation project, it's up to that agency to protect the health of employees and citizens. This fact sheet is designed to make you aware of applicable regulations.

Asbestos was labeled a hazardous air pollutant in 1972 under the Federal Clean Air Act. Today, most asbestos-containing products have been phased out.

Asbestos is regulated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), which administers the national emission standards for asbestos and other hazardous air pollutants. When a local government agency is involved in the demolition of a facility, including any institutional, commercial, public, industrial, or residential structure, installation, or building, procedures for asbestos inspections and notification to the MPCA must be followed. The responsibility of adhering to the emission standards is equally distributed between the owner and operator(s) of the facility.

Prior to demolition or renovation, the building or affected portion of the building must be inspected for the presence of asbestos by an asbestos inspector accredited through the U.S. Environmental Agency Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act. If there are more than 260 linear feet or 160 square feet of regulated asbestos-containing materials (ACM) in the facility, then a licensed asbestos abatement contractor must be hired to remove the ACM prior to demolition or abatement. To determine if the ACM needs to be removed for projects involving residential buildings, the total ACM for all buildings being demolished or renovated for a project must be determined.

**A complete notification form must be sent to the MPCA at least 10 working days prior to demolition.** The notice contains such information as the demolition contractor, facility description, disposal location, and dates of demolition.

Some asbestos-containing materials, such as resilient floor coverings, asphalt roofing products, and gaskets can be left in place, in any quantity, for demolitions if the facility will not be intentionally burned or subject to sanding, cutting, grinding or abrading.

For a copy of the notice of intent to demolish a building, or for general information regarding the asbestos regulations or emission standards, contact the MPCA at (651)296-7300 or (800)657-3864.



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