

The Truth About Asbestos

We all know about the relationship between serious illnesses, cancer and deaths due to the prolonged inhalation of asbestos fibers.

And we all know that in homes built after 1980, asbestos is probably not present... or do we?

Here is an overview of the asbestos timeline to help put things into proper perspective:

- 1973** - The EPA banned the use of asbestos for sprayed-on application of fireproofing and insulating.
- 1975** - The EPA banned the use of pre-formed asbestos block insulation on boilers, hot water tanks and asbestos pipe insulation.
- 1978** - The EPA banned the use of asbestos for decorating purposes.
- 1981** - The EPA requested information from American companies regarding the asbestos content of their products.
- 1989** - The EPA issued the Asbestos Ban and Phase Out Rule which was subsequently overturned in a court case which left many consumer products that could still contain asbestos. These products include asbestos-cement corrugated sheet, asbestos-cement flat sheet, asbestos clothing, pipeline wrap, roofing felt, vinyl-asbestos floor tile, asbestos-cement shingle, millboard, asbestos-cement pipe, automatic transmission components, clutch facings, friction materials, disc brake pads, drum brake linings, brake blocks, gaskets, non-roofing coatings, and roof coatings.
- 1990** - W. R. Grace & Company closed their mine which harvested vermiculite that was contaminated with asbestos. However, the asbestos containing ore continued to be used as attic and wall insulation, wallboard, and fireproofing into the early 1990's. EPA research on vermiculite attic insulation in 2001 and 2002, found homeowners that used the attic could be exposed to airborne asbestos fibers.
- 1991** - The EPA was prevented from banning asbestos because research showed the ban would cost up to 800 million while only saving around 200 lives in a 13-year timeframe, and that the EPA did not provide adequate evidence for the safety of alternative products.
- 2001** - The New York Times reported that W. R. Grace & Company's Monokote fireproofing spray product, (used into the late 1980's), was contaminated with asbestos.
- 2005** - Seven of W. R. Grace & Company's current or former executives were indicted on federal charges that they knowingly put their workers and the public in danger through exposure to vermiculite ore contaminated with asbestos from it's mine in Libby, Montana.
- 2007** - Sampling by the Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization found asbestos in a number of current building materials purchased at Home Depot and Lowes including DAP's "33" window glazing, "Crack Shot" spackling paste and Gardner's leak stopper roof patch as well as other products from Gardner.
- 2010** - Washington State banned asbestos in automotive brakes beginning 2014.

Until the mid-1980s, small amounts of asbestos were used in the manufacture of Artex, a decorative stipple finish, however, some of the lesser-known suppliers of Artex were still adding asbestos until 1999. Sprayed coatings, pipe insulation and Asbestos Insulating Board (AIB) are thought to be the most dangerous due to their high content of asbestos and friable nature. Many older buildings built before the late 1990s may contain asbestos.

For more information go to:

www.mesotheliomacenter.org
www.mesothelioma.com

What kinds of building materials may contain asbestos?

Products that may contain asbestos			
Product	Location	% Asbestos	Dates of Use
ROOFING & SIDING			
Roofing felts	Flat, built up roofs	10-15	1910-present
Roof felt shingles	Roofs	1	1971-1974
Roofing shingles	Roofs	20-32	?-present
Roofing Tiles	Roofs	20-30	1930-present
Siding shingles	Siding	12-14	?-present
Clapboards	Siding	12-15	1944-1945
WALLS & CEILINGS			
Sprayed coating	Ceilings, walls, and steelwork	1-95	1935-1978
Troweled coating	Ceilings, walls	1-95	1936-1978
Asbestos-cement sheet	Near heat sources such as fireplaces, boilers	20-50	1930-present
Spackle	Walls, ceilings	3-5	1930-1978
Joint compounds	Walls, ceilings	3-5	1945-1977
Textured paints	Walls, ceilings	4-15	?-1978
Millboard, rollboard	Walls, commercial buildings	80-85	1925-?
Vinyl wallpaper	Walls	6-8	?
Insulation board	Walls	30	?
FLOORS			
Vinyl-asbestos tile	Floors	21	1950-1980?
Asphalt-asbestos tile	Floors	26-33	1920-1980?
Resilient sheet flooring	Floors	30	1950-1980?
Mastic adhesives	Sheet flooring and tile backing	5-25	1945-1980?
PIPES & BOILERS			
Cement pipe and fittings	Water and sewer mains	20-?	1935-present
Block insulation	Boilers	6-15	1890-1978
Preformed pipe wrap	Pipes	50	1926-1975
Corrugated asbestos paper	Pipes, high temp., moderate temp.	90 35-70	1935-1980? 1910-1980?
Paper tape	Furnaces, steam valves, flanges, electrical wiring	80	1901-1980?

Putty (mudding)	Plumbing joints	20-100	1900-1973
OTHER PRODUCTS			
Gaskets/Packing	Pipe flanges, boiler doors, valves, pumps	10-80	1900-1980s
Cloth/Blankets	Welding accessory, pipe insulation, curtains, clothing	40-100	1900-1985
Clothing (gloves, mittens, sleeves, aprons, coats, jackets, pants, hoods, spats)	Heat and fire resistant protective clothing	40-100	1900-1985
cement/mortar	Used as a castable insulation on furnaces, pipes, boilers, brick	5-100	1900-1975
metal-clad firebrick	Found in Open Hearth Furnaces and Basic Oxygen Furnaces	10	1950-1980s
gunnite/fire-proofing spray	Sprayed onto furnaces as well as structural steel for fireproofing protection	20-75	1900-1980s
hot-tops (ingot mold covers and inserts)	Used with ingot molds in the steel pouring process	10-80	1960-1980