

Policy on the Disposal of Waste Asbestos

Purpose

This guide provides information on requirements and regulations respecting handling of waste asbestos to protect public health and safety, and the environment.

Identification

Asbestos refers to the naturally occurring fibrous mineral that can be classified as either serpentine (long and flexible fibres) or as amphibole (brittle and sharp fibres). As of 2018, the Government of Canada banned asbestos and asbestos-containing products.

Friable waste asbestos is asbestos waste material that can be easily pulverized, crumbled and powdered when dry.

All buildings constructed before 1990 are likely to contain asbestos in some of the building materials. This include houses, public buildings, industrial buildings, etc. Asbestos is heat-resistant and insulating, which made it commonly used. Materials that may contain asbestos include flooring products, loose fill attic insulations, wall and ceiling materials, exterior cladding and roofing materials, glue and adhesives, thermal mechanical insulation and electrical components. Asbestos fibres become hazardous if released into the air by product deterioration, cutting, sanding or other disturbances.

To determine if a material contains asbestos, a material sample can be tested at an accredited laboratory.

Exposure Risk

Health hazards from asbestos occur through inhalation of asbestos fibres. Exposure to asbestos fibres poses a risk of lung diseases, including lung cancer. Mesothelioma is the most common form

of cancer associated with asbestos exposure. Asbestos exposure may also lead to asbestosis, an inflammatory condition affecting the lungs.

Well-maintained and undisturbed asbestos does not present an immediate risk to health.

Legislation

The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2010, The Dangerous Goods Transportation Act, and The Saskatchewan Employment Act regulate waste asbestos in Saskatchewan. Specific requirements are found in regulations supporting the above acts, including:

- *The Municipal Refuse Management Regulations* provide requirements for the acceptance and disposal of asbestos goods waste by landfills.
- *The Dangerous Goods Transportation Regulations* adopt federal *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992* requirements for transporting asbestos material within Saskatchewan.
- *The Hazardous Substances and Waste Dangerous Goods Regulations* provide requirements for the storage of asbestos materials.
- *The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations* outline safety requirements for persons handling asbestos materials.

Summary of Requirements

Asbestos waste materials must be secured in an approved manner that will prevent atmospheric dispersion of the asbestos fibres.

Containment and Transport

Asbestos waste material, including contaminated disposable clothing, must be double-bagged. The bags should be a

minimum of six millimetres thick and made of polyethylene. Containers must be impervious to asbestos. External surfaces of the containers must be wiped down. This can be done either with a damp cloth that is then considered asbestos waste, or an industrial vacuum cleaner fitted with a HEPA filter.

Employees, including transport drivers, must be adequately trained in precautions to be taken. The receptacles must be protected from physical damage during handling and transport. If the waste materials may puncture the bags, a suitable rigid container may be selected.

Labeling

Asbestos waste shall be labeled in accordance with regulatory requirements to ensure all persons have a clear understanding of risks. A label must clearly say "Asbestos." It may also state that asbestos is carcinogenic and asbestos fibres should not be inhaled. Vehicles shall have the appropriate placards and signs.

Disposal

Waste asbestos material received by a ministry-approved landfill is to be immediately buried. Prior arrangements, including receipt requirements, shall be made with the landfill owner prior to disposal. If an asbestos container is ruptured, it must be repacked before burial.

More Information

Contact the Ministry of Environment Inquiry Centre during business hours at 1-800-567-4224 or by email at centre.inquiry@gov.sk.ca

Other resources online:

Saskatchewan Asbestos Abatement Manual