



MIOSHA Fact Sheet

Construction Safety & Health Division

Asbestos Exposure in Construction

Asbestos refers to a group of naturally occurring minerals that can separate into microscopic needlelike fibers. The most common forms are Chrysotile, Amosite, and Crocidolite. When released into the atmosphere, the size and shape of the fibers permits them to remain airborne for long periods of time and thus contaminate the environment.

If inhaled, the fibers can cause three specific asbestos-related diseases: Asbestosis (a fibrous scarring of the lungs), Lung Cancer, and Mesothelioma (a cancer of the lining of the chest or abdominal cavity). These diseases do not develop immediately after inhalation of asbestos fibers and typically have a latency period ranging from 15 to 40 years.

Asbestos has been used in more than 3,000 different products over the last 100 years primarily because of its chemical and fire resistant properties. Common products in buildings that contain asbestos include pipe insulation, asphalt, vinyl flooring materials, ceiling tile, spray-on fire proofing, boiler wrap insulation, wall/ceiling decorative plasters, fire doors, and old electrical wire insulation.

Building Owner and Employer/Contractor Responsibilities

The MIOSHA [Asbestos for General Industry Standard](#), Part 305, and the [Asbestos Standards for Construction](#), Part 602, both require pre-1981 building owners to conduct a thorough asbestos building survey. This survey must identify the presence, location and quantity of asbestos-containing material (ACM) and/or presumed asbestos-containing material (PACM) within the building. Pre-1981 materials presumed to contain asbestos include thermal system insulation (e.g., applied to pipes, fittings, boilers, breeching, tanks, ducts, or other structural components to prevent heat loss or gain) and surfacing material (e.g., sprayed, troweled-on, or otherwise applied to surfaces for acoustical, fireproofing, or other purposes). It also includes asphalt and vinyl flooring materials. The only way a contractor can rebut the designation of PACM is by having material sampling and laboratory analysis performed in accordance with Part 602, 1926.1101 (k)(5). Once the building has been determined to have ACM/PACM, a contractor working in the facility must assess whether their work may require them to disturb or remove these materials during renovation/demolition activities. If so, they must comply with applicable work practices and procedures in Part 602. Contractors removing or encapsulating friable ACM/PACM may require licensing under the Michigan Asbestos Abatement Contractor Licensing Act (Act 135, P.A. 1986, as amended).

How to Avoid Hazards

Pre-job planning is vital to a safe and healthy workplace. The following concerns must be addressed before work begins:

- Provide asbestos awareness training annually for all employees who may contact ACM/PACM. A key element of this training is to teach employees to recognize materials that may contain asbestos.
- Obtain a copy of the asbestos building survey prior to initiating work in the facility.
- Verify that all suspect ACM that employees will disturb has been tested and confirmed to be non-ACM (i.e., cross check with the asbestos building survey).
- Be aware of other contractors on-site and their work activities that may disturb ACM/PACM.

- Ensure that a Michigan licensed abatement contractor performs asbestos removal work with properly accredited employees.

Asbestos Regulations Summary

MIOSHA Regulations [Part 305](#) and [Part 602](#):

- Requires an asbestos building/facility inspection in pre-1981 buildings.
- Obligates the building/facility owner to notify immediate employees and contractors working in facility of asbestos building/facility survey results.
- If the building survey is not available, obligates contractors/employers to presume suspect materials contain asbestos until a proper rebuttal through material sampling/analysis is performed.
- Specifies required work practices, protective equipment and procedures for employees removing and/or disturbing ACM and/or PACM.
- Requires asbestos awareness training for employees who may contact but not disturb ACM and/or PACM. Training focuses on building materials that may contain asbestos to help assure that the building survey identified these materials and to prevent unintended disturbances.

[Michigan Public Act 135 of 1986](#) (as amended), Asbestos Abatement Contractor Licensing Act:

- Requires contractors removing or encapsulating friable ACM on another person's property to be a licensed Asbestos Abatement Contractor. Contractors that are Michigan licensed as plumbers, electricians, residential builders, residential maintenance and alteration contractors, or mechanical contractors are exempt from the asbestos abatement contractor licensing requirements if the asbestos abatement work they are performing is incidental to their primary licensed trade and does not exceed 260 linear feet or 160 square feet of friable material.
- Requires the contractor to provide a 10-day project notification to the Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Growth's (DELEG) Asbestos Program for projects exceeding 10 linear feet or 15 square feet, or both, of friable asbestos materials.
- Requires contractors to perform clearance air monitoring at the completion of asbestos abatement projects involving a negative pressure enclosure.
- Authorizes penalties and fines for violations of the Act.
- Authorizes suspension, revocation, and denial of an asbestos abatement contractor's license.

[Michigan Public Act 440 of 1988](#) (as amended), Asbestos Workers Accreditation Act:

- Requires persons who perform asbestos-related work in schools, school buildings, and public and commercial buildings to be properly trained and accredited through the DELEG Asbestos Program, before performing the work (i.e., asbestos abatement workers, contractor/supervisors, building inspectors, management planners, and project designers).
- Requires trainers who train asbestos abatement workers, contractor/supervisors, building inspectors, management planners, and project designers in Michigan to be approved by the DELEG Asbestos Program before providing the training.
- Authorizes penalties and fines for violations of the Act.
- Authorizes the suspension, revocation, or denial of accreditation and trainer approval.

For further information concerning asbestos related issues, contractor licensing, or worker accreditation in the State of Michigan, please visit the [Asbestos Program website](#).

DELEG is an equal opportunity employer/program.

Auxiliary aids, services and other reasonable accommodations are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.



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