

Catastrophic Emergency Events Involving Asbestos

NOTE: This fact sheet is not a substitution of NESHAP rules. It is intended to assist Arizona residents, local officials, fire management agencies, and building departments in managing potential asbestos hazards resulting from a catastrophic event or disaster.

PURPOSE

This fact sheet is intended to help ensure, to the extent feasible and compatible with other emergency measures, all appropriate steps are taken to safely handle and dispose of all asbestos, while avoiding unnecessary exposure to asbestos.

BACKGROUND

Buildings, structures, and some facility components can be made up of materials that may contain asbestos. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established the Asbestos National Emission Standard for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP). Those regulations have been adopted by the State of Arizona. The asbestos regulations are intended to minimize the release and exposure of asbestos fibers during activities involving the handling of asbestos. The asbestos regulations specify work practices to be followed during renovation, demolition, and other abatement activities when friable asbestos is present.

For assistance in determining if you are a regulated facility, see the applicability diagram on the back of this fact sheet.

WHAT IS ASBESTOS?

Asbestos is a mineral fiber. It can be positively identified only with a special type of microscope. There are several types of asbestos fibers, all of which can have an adverse affect on human health.

For more information on the health effects of asbestos, you can visit the Center for Disease Control at <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/asbestos/>

In the past, asbestos was added to a variety of home and building products to strengthen them and to provide heat insulation and fire resistance.

The following common home and building products have the potential to contain asbestos.

- Sprayed on Materials (Soundproofing or decorative material)
- Popcorn ceilings
- Patching and joint compounds for walls and ceilings
- Textured paints
- Some roofing and siding shingles
- Resilient floor tiles (vinyl, asphalt, and rubber)
- The backing on vinyl sheet flooring, and adhesives used for installing floor tile.

For more information on asbestos in your home, you can visit the U.S. EPA Web site:

<http://www.epa.gov/asbestos/pubs/ashome.html>

HOW DO I TEST THE BURNED DEBRIS FOR ASBESTOS?

There are professionals who can collect samples to take to a certified lab to determine if there is asbestos. However, burned debris that is extremely damaged or reduced to ash may not be identifiable. In this instance, ADEQ advises the owner and operator to assume the waste is positive for asbestos and to handle, place in containers and transport the waste as soon as practicable to a landfill as asbestos containing waste.

WHAT STATE REGULATIONS DO I NEED TO FOLLOW WHEN CLEANING UP A PROPERTY WITH ASBESTOS?

The asbestos NESHAP is applicable to any facility undergoing renovation or demolition. "Facility" means any institutional, commercial, public, industrial, or residential structure, installation, or building (including any structure, installation, or building containing condominiums or individual dwelling units operated as a residential cooperative, but excluding residential buildings having four or fewer dwelling units; any ship; and any active or inactive waste disposal site.

HOW SHOULD I CLEAN UP MY UNREGULATED PROPERTY?

The Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) have provided safety tips and guidance on their Web sites:

Wildfires and your Health from ADHS:
www.azdhs.gov/phs/oeh/wildfire.htm
 (See SAFE TIPS ON WILDFIRE ASH CLEANUP)

Worker Safety during Fire Cleanup fact sheet from the CDC:
emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/wildfires/cleanup-workers.asp

WHAT IF I HIRE SOMEONE TO CLEAN UP MY BURNED DEBRIS?

Contractors are required to follow state and federal OSHA rules. If the contractor is performing renovation or demolition on a regulated facility which has either tested positive for asbestos or assumed positive for asbestos, and the amount of Asbestos Containing Material is over the threshold amounts listed in the NESHAP regulation, then a NESHAP Notification form must be filled out and submitted to ADEQ.

WHERE CAN I GET NESHAP NOTIFICATION FORMS?

ADEQ’s NESHAP Notification form can be found at: www.azdeq.gov/enviro/air/asbestos/index.html. Additional information and guidance documents are also available at this site.

HOW DO I DISPOSE OF BURNED DEBRIS AND WHERE CAN I TAKE IT?

Contact your local landfill or city government for guidance on how to contain and transport the burned debris and where to take your burned debris.

WHO CAN I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

For more information on Asbestos NESHAP applicability, transport, or disposal:

Arizona Department of Environmental Quality
 Air Quality Division – Field Services Unit
 1110 W. Washington St. Phoenix, AZ 85007
 (602) 771-2333 or
 toll free at (800) 234-5677 Ext. 771-5677
 Hearing impaired persons call
 ADEQ's TDD line: (602) 771-4829

