



Safety Tip of the Week

Safety with Asbestos

Asbestos is used in many products because of its high tensile strength, flexibility, and resistance to chemical and thermal breakdown. Asbestos is used in insulation, fireproofing materials, automotive brakes, cement and wallboard materials, floor tiles and roofing material.

Exposure:

Disturbing asbestos materials may generate airborne asbestos fibers. Asbestos is only dangerous if it becomes airborne. To be a significant health concern, asbestos fibers must be inhaled over an extended period of time. Asbestos fibers then accumulate in the lungs. As exposure increases, the risk of asbestos related diseases also increases. As long as asbestos containing materials are not damaged, the asbestos fibers do not become airborne and do not pose a health threat.



Asbestosis

Asbestos Related Diseases:

Asbestosis– is a scarring of the lung tissue. The scarring impacts the elasticity of the lungs and lowers its ability to transfer oxygen and carbon dioxide. Asbestosis is a slowly progressive disease, taking 15 to 30 years to fully develop.

Mesothelioma– is a type of cancer. This disease attacks the lining of the space holding the lungs, called the pleura. Mesothelioma is considered to be exclusively related to asbestos exposure. Mesothelioma may take 30 to 40 years to develop.

Lung Cancer– is a malignant tumor in the lungs. The tumor grows through the surrounding tissues, invading and blocking the air passages of the lungs. The time between exposure to asbestos and the occurrence of lung cancer may be 20 to 30 years. It should be noted that there is a multiplying effect between smoking and asbestos exposure, which creates a high susceptibility to lung cancer.

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