

## Asbestos—Type 1 operations (low risk)

*NOTE: Before giving this safety talk, ensure the type of asbestos operation has been confirmed.*

### Explain dangers

Asbestos is a fibre that was used in many building materials up until the 1980s. Some products that are installed today still contain asbestos.

Breathing in asbestos fibres can cause

- Asbestosis (scarring of the lungs making it difficult to breathe)
- Lung cancer
- Mesothelioma (cancer in the lining of the chest and/or abdomen).

#### Quick Facts about Mesothelioma

1. Most people who get Mesothelioma have been exposed to asbestos.
2. Mesothelioma is an extremely painful disease.
3. There is no cure for Mesothelioma.
4. People usually live for only two years once diagnosed.

There are three types of asbestos operations in Ontario; **Type 1**, Type 2 and Type 3. In Type 1 operations, the risk of asbestos exposure to workers is low if specific procedures are followed.

Asbestos-containing materials (ACM) in Type 1 operations are non-friable. The fibres in the material are locked in by cement, vinyl, or another binding agent. However, cutting, grinding, abrading, sanding, breaking, drilling, or vibrating the material may be enough to release the fibres.

Some common types of non-friable asbestos-containing materials include

- gaskets
- asbestos cement
- acoustical plaster and tiles
- vinyl tiles

- roofing felts
- drywall joint-filling compounds

### Identify controls

The following steps are not only required by law but also can help reduce your risk of exposure to asbestos.

- Don't eat, drink or smoke in areas where asbestos could be present.
- Although the risk of exposure to asbestos is low for Type 1 operations, you may choose to use a respirator and protective clothing.
- Before beginning work, use a damp cloth or HEPA vacuum to clean up any visible dust.
- For non-friable asbestos, wet the material using a wetting agent and only use non-powered hand tools.
- Never use compressed air to clean the work area.
- Using a HEPA vacuum or damp mop, regularly clean up asbestos dust and waste.
- All personal protective equipment, such as respirators or protective coveralls, must be damp wiped or HEPA vacuumed before leaving the work area.
- Dispose of all asbestos waste and coveralls in dust-tight containers labeled with warning signs.
- Never reuse drop sheets.
- Rigid barriers/portable enclosures must be damp wiped or HEPA vacuumed; otherwise, do not reuse them.
- Always wash your face and hands before leaving the work area.

### Demonstrate

Using the owner's record or report of asbestos (if applicable), review the following with your crew:

- the location of ACM on site
- areas to keep away from
- the specific procedures to follow.