



How to Protect Yourself from Asbestos Hazards

Cleaning up after a flood requires hundreds of workers to renovate and repair, or tear down and dispose of, damaged or destroyed structures and materials. However, repair, renovation, and demolition operations often generate airborne **asbestos**, a mineral fiber that can cause chronic lung disease or cancer. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has developed regulations designed to protect cleanup workers from asbestos hazards.

How You Can Become Exposed to Asbestos

Before it was known that inhalation of asbestos fibers causes several deadly diseases—including asbestosis, a progressive and often fatal lung disease, and lung and other cancers—asbestos was used in a large number of building materials and other products because of its strength, flame resistance, and insulating properties. Asbestos was used in asbestos-cement pipe and sheeting, floor and roofing felts, dry wall, floor tiles, spray-on ceiling coatings, and packing materials.

When buildings containing these materials are renovated or torn down, or when the asbestos-containing materials themselves are disturbed, minute asbestos fibers may be released into the air. The fibers are so small that they often cannot be seen with the naked eye; the fact that you can inhale these fibers without knowing it makes asbestos an even more dangerous hazard.

OSHA's Standards for Asbestos

The work of flood cleanup personnel involves the repair, renovation, removal, demolition, or salvage of flood-damaged structures and materials. Such materials may contain or be covered with asbestos, and cleanup personnel are protected by OSHA's construction industry asbestos standard (*Title 29 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)*, Part 1926.1101). This standard requires employers to follow various procedures to protect their

employees from inhaling asbestos fibers. The standard contains many requirements that vary depending on the kind of work being undertaken, the amount of asbestos in the air, and other factors. You and your employer can obtain a copy of this standard and the booklet, *Asbestos Standards for Construction* (OSHA 3096) describing how to comply with it, from OSHA Publications, P.O. Box 37535, Washington, DC 20013-7535, (202) 693-1888(phone), or (202) 693-2498(fax); or visit OSHA's website at www.osha.gov.

Major Elements of OSHA's Asbestos Standard

The following include some of the major requirements of the asbestos standard. For complete information on all requirements, see 29 *CFR* 1926.1101.

- A permissible exposure limit (PEL) of 0.1 fiber of asbestos per cubic centimeter of air as averaged over an 8-hour period, with an excursion limit of 1.0 asbestos fibers per cubic centimeter over a 30-minute period.
- Requirements for an initial exposure assessment to ascertain expected exposures during that work operation, and periodic exposure monitoring in certain instances.
- Use of engineering controls, to the extent feasible, to meet the PEL. Where this is not possible, engineering controls must be used to reduce exposures to the lowest levels possible and then supplemented by the use of appropriate respiratory protection.
- Use of regulated areas to limit access to locations where asbestos concentrations may be dangerously high.
- No smoking, eating, or drinking in asbestos-regulated areas.
- Requirements for warning signs and caution labels to identify and communicate the presence of hazards and hazardous materials; recordkeeping; and medical surveillance.

OSHA Area Offices

Area	Telephone	Area	Telephone	Area	Telephone
Albany, NY	(518) 464-4338	Denver, CO	(303) 844-5285	Nashville, TN	(615) 781-5423
Albuquerque, NM	(505) 248-5302	Des Plaines, IL	(847) 803-4800	New York, NY	(212) 466-2482
Allentown, PA	(610) 776-0592	Des Moines, IA	(515) 284-4794	Norfolk, VA	(757) 441-3820
Anchorage, AK	(907) 271-5152	Englewood, CO	(303) 843-4515	North Aurora, IL	(630) 896-8700
Appleton, WI	(920) 734-4521	Erie, PA	(814) 833-5758	Oklahoma City, OK	(405) 231-5351
Augusta, ME	(207) 622-8417	Fort Lauderdale, FL	(954) 424-0242	Omaha, NE	(402) 221-3182
Austin, TX	(512) 916-5783	Fort Worth, TX	(817) 428-2470	Parsippany, NJ	(973) 263-1003
Avenel, NJ	(908) 750-3270	Frankfort, KY	(502) 227-7024	Peoria, IL	(309) 671-7033
Baton Rouge, LA	(225) 389-0474	Harrisburg, PA	(787) 277-1560	Philadelphia, PA	(215) 597-4955
Bayside, NY	(718) 279-9060	Hartford, CT	(860) 240-3152	Phoenix, AZ	(602) 640-2007
Bellevue, WA	(206) 553-7520	Hasbrouck Heights, NJ	(201) 288-1700	Pittsburgh, PA	(412) 395-4903
Billings, MT	(406) 247-7499	Honolulu, HI	(808) 541-2685	Portland, OR	(503) 326-2251
Birmingham, AL	(205) 731-1534	Houston, TX	(281) 286-0583	Providence, RI	(401) 528-4669
Bismarck, ND	(701) 250-4521	Houston, TX	(281) 591-2438	Raleigh, NC	(919) 856-4770
Boise, ID	(208) 321-2960	Indianapolis, IN	(317) 226-7290	Salt Lake City, UT	(801) 487-0680
Bowmansville, NY	(716) 684-3891	Jackson, MS	(601) 965-4606	San Francisco, CA	(619) 557-2909
Braintree, MA	(617) 565-6924	Jacksonville, FL	(904) 232-2895	Savannah, GA	(912) 652-4393
Bridgeport, CT	(203) 579-5581	Kansas City, MO	(816) 483-9531	Smyrna, GA	(770) 984-8700
Calumet City, IL	(708) 891-3800	Lansing, MI	(517) 377-1892	Springfield, MA	(413) 785-0123
Carson City, NV	(702) 885-6963	Linthicum, MD	(410) 865-2055	St. Louis, MO	(314) 425-4249
Charleston, ArV	(304) 347-5937	Little Rock, AR	(501) 324-6291	Syracuse, NY	(315) 451-0808
Cincinnati, OH	(513) 841-4132	Lubbock, TX	(806) 472-7681	Tampa, FL	(813) 626-1177
Cleveland, OH	(216) 522-3818	Madison, WI	(608) 264-5388	Tarrytown, NY	(914) 524-7510
Columbia, SC	(803) 765-5904	Marlton, NJ	(609) 757-5181	Toledo, OH	(419) 259-7542
Columbus, OH	(614) 469-5582	Methuen, MA	(617) 565-8110	Tucker, GA	(770) 493-6644
Concord, NH	(603) 225-1629	Milwaukee, WI	(414) 297-3315	Westbury, NY	(516) 334-3344
Corpus Christi, TX	(512) 888-3420	Minneapolis, MN	(612) 664-5460	Wichita, KS	(316) 269-6644
Dallas, TX	(214) 320-2400	Mobile, AL	(334) 441-6131	Wilkes-Barre, PA	(717) 826-6538
				Wilmington, DE	(302) 573-6115

OSHA Consultation Project Directory

Regional Offices	Telephone	State	Telephone	State	Telephone
<i>Region I</i>		Alabama	(205) 348-3033	New Hampshire	(603) 271-2024
Boston, MA	(617) 565-9860	Alaska	(907) 269-4957	New Jersey	(609) 292-3923
<i>Region II</i>		Arizona	(602) 542-5795	New Mexico	(505) 827-4230
New York, NY	(212) 337-2378	Arkansas	(501) 682-4522	New York	(518) 457-2238
<i>Region III</i>		California	(415) 703-5270	North Carolina	(919) 807-2905
Philadelphia, PA	(215) 596-1201	Colorado	(970) 491-6151	North Dakota	(701) 328-5188
<i>Region IV</i>		Connecticut	(860) 566-4550	Ohio	(614) 644-2246
Atlanta, GA	(404) 562-2300	Delaware	(302) 761-8219	Oklahoma	(405) 528-1500
<i>Region V</i>		District of Columbia	(202) 576-6339	Oregon	(503) 378-3272
Chicago, IL	(312) 353-2220	Florida	(850) 922-8955	Pennsylvania	(724) 357-2396
<i>Region VI</i>		Georgia	(404) 894-2643	Puerto Rico	(787) 754-2171
Dallas, TX	(214) 767-4731	Guam	011- (671) 475-0136	Rhode Island	(401) 222-2438
<i>Region VII</i>		Hawaii	(808) 586-9100	South Carolina	(803) 734-9614
Kansas City, MO	(816) 426-5861	Idaho	(208) 426-3283	South Dakota	(605) 688-4101
<i>Region VIII</i>		Illinois	(312) 814-2337	Tennessee	(615) 741-7036
Denver, CO	(803) 844-3061	Indiana	(317) 232-2688	Texas	(512) 440-3854
<i>Region IX</i>		Iowa	(515) 965-7162	Utah	(801) 530-6901
San Francisco, CA	(415) 975-4310	Kansas	(785) 296-7476	Vermont	(802) 828-2765
<i>Region X</i>		Kentucky	(502) 564-6895	Virginia	(804) 786-6359
Seattle, WA	(206) 553-5930	Louisiana	(225) 342-9601	Virgin Islands	(809) 772-1315
		Maine	(207) 624-6460	Washington	(360) 902-5638
		Maryland	(410) 880-4970	West Virginia	(304) 558-7890
		Massachusetts	(617) 727-3982	Wisconsin	(608) 266-8579(H)
		Michigan	(517) 322-6823(H)		(414) 521-5063(S)
			(517) 322-1809(S)	Wyoming	(307) 777-7786
		Minnesota	(651) 297-2393		
		Mississippi	(601) 987-3981	(H) - Health	
		Missouri	(573) 751-3403	(S) - Safety	
		Montana	(406) 444-6418		
		Nebraska	(402) 471-4717		
		Nevada	(702) 486-9140		