

Removing Your Own Asbestos A Good Idea or a Bad Idea?

HOMEGUARD ENVIRONMENTAL, Connecticut's leading Residential Asbestos Abatement Company assists its clients in assessing this potentially problematic environmental issue.



TEN GOOD REASONS

In the course of our business, we are frequently contacted regarding situations where property owners, or agents, in preparation for the sale of a property, or for work that may be contemplated involving Asbestos-covered pipes, boilers, furnaces, or ducts, make a conscious and unfortunate decision to foolishly and often illegally circumvent the existing State and Federal regulations which very clearly and strictly regulate the removal and disposal of Asbestos.

When we are called in, generally at the behest of either a broker, lending institution, buyer or attorney, it is not only to attempt to remedy the damage that has already been done, but to help avoid the almost certain **intervention by the State**, and to help preclude the **possibility of litigation**. Frequently, this is not possible.

Here are **TEN** very good reasons why it's foolhardy for "do-it-yourselfers" to attempt to remove Asbestos without the benefit of the services of a licensed environmental contractor:

- 1 **Unlicensed individuals who remove Asbestos put themselves as well as building occupants at great risk.** Professional Asbestos Abatement Technicians wear respirators and protective garments, and work under negative air pressure to avoid contact with the microscopic fibers.

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WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

To better understand the Asbestos Project, following is a list of some of the terms common to Asbestos Abatement, and the applicable regulations.

ACM (Asbestos-Containing Material): Material composed of any type of Asbestos, and in an amount greater than one percent by weight.

FRIABLE ACM: Any Asbestos-containing material that hand pressure can crumble, pulverize, or reduce to powder.

NON-FRIABLE ACM: Any Asbestos-containing material that hand pressure cannot crumble, pulverize or reduce to powder when dry.

ASBESTOS ABATEMENT: The removal, encapsulation, enclosure, renovation, repair or demolition of asbestos-containing materials.

ENCAPSULATION: The treatment of Asbestos with a special material that surrounds or seals Asbestos to prevent the release of fibers.

NOTIFICATION OF ABATEMENT: A form which the licensed Abatement Contractor is required to complete and submit to the State Department of Environmental Health at least ten days prior to the start of any project involving greater than ten linear feet or twenty square feet of Asbestos. The form lists the abatement site, the scope of the project, and other items pertaining to the work, including abatement methods to be employed, and the name and location of the disposal site.

CONTAINMENT: The area within which the actual abatement takes place. The containment is separated from non-work areas by airtight barriers. All floor and wall surfaces are covered with two layers of thick polyethylene sheeting. Micro-traps are set up and used during the abatement process.

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Published by HOMEGUARD to assist our valued clients towards a better understanding of critical environmental issues and legislation.

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TOP TEN LIST

(Continued from reverse)

- 2 **The immediate area can become contaminated**, including all personal possessions where Asbestos removal was attempted.
- 3 **There is an additional risk of contaminating the rest of the building.** Professional Asbestos Abatement is performed in a tightly sealed area. The "Containment" serves to contain the fibers dislodged during the removal process and permits the area to be properly cleaned and "hepa-vacuumed" to ensure safety.
- 4 **It will cost MORE.** It can be considerably more expensive to undo the harm and clean up the contamination, than to have removed the Asbestos properly from the start.
- 5 **There will be no documentation**, such as the State Notification Form, Disposal Manifest, or Clearance Air Testing Report available to substantiate that, in fact, the Asbestos was removed and disposed of properly and legally.
- 6 **"Covering up", or trying to hide the fact that Asbestos was removed improperly**, can lead to very expensive litigation after a property is sold.
- 7 **There will always be telltale signs of Asbestos left behind** — either Asbestos fibers will remain in the air or Asbestos residue will remain on pipes and other surfaces. Asbestos Removal is a very tedious, methodical, and specialized process. It is impossible for anyone except those trained, experienced, and certified to do it properly.
- 8 **The cost of Asbestos Removal is truly reasonable**, when compared to the cost of other maintenance activities required on most properties.
- 9 **While there can be legal consequences for improper removal, the consequences for improper disposal of the Asbestos can be far greater.** Two penalties are imprisonment and extremely heavy fines.
- 10 **Remember, "He who gets caught holding the hot potato"** will suffer undue personal embarrassment, and possible financial penalties.

We're HOMEGUARD AND WE'RE HERE TO HELP YOU!

At HOMEGUARD we stand prepared to assist you towards a better understanding of critical environmental issues. If it relates to the environment, we understand it and we're only too happy to share our knowledge with you.

DEFINITIONS

(Continued from reverse)

MICROTRAP: A sophisticated filtration device that provides negative air pressure or a vacuum within the containment and filters out Asbestos and any other fibers or particulates that may be airborne prior to or during the abatement process. The microtrap prevents these fibers from escaping back into the living area.

HEPA VAC (High Efficiency Particulate Air): A highly sophisticated vacuum and filtering system used during the abatement project. The HEPA filter is capable of filtering out as much as 99.7% of particles as small as 0.3 microns.

PCM (Phase Contrast Microscopy): Air clearance test performed by an independent, state-certified Industrial Hygienist, required to be performed at the conclusion of all abatement projects involving no less than five hundred linear feet or less than fifteen hundred square feet of Asbestos. PCM air samples collected are generally inspected on site by the Hygienist, with results available within a few hours.

TEM (Transmission Electron Microscopy): Air Clearance test performed on projects involving Asbestos in excess of five hundred linear feet, or fifteen hundred square feet. TEM air samples collected by the Hygienist must be sent to a laboratory for analysis, with results available the following day.

CLEARANCE FOR RE-OCCUPANCY: The combination of Visual Inspection and Air Monitoring. Upon completion, a certificate is issued by the independent Hygienist. It states that based on the test results, the fiber count in the air is within the prescribed state guidelines and that the visual inspection has not revealed the existence of any residual Asbestos debris. Once the certificate is issued and after the Abatement Technicians have removed all materials, tools and equipment, the work area is determined to be safe for normal use.

DISPOSAL MANIFEST: A document signed by the Abatement Contractor, the Transporter, and representative of the Disposal Facility, stating the quantity of Asbestos removed from the project and verifying that it was properly transported to and disposed of at an authorized disposal facility, in accordance with all regulations.

HOMEGUARD is the region's premier environmental contractor, licensed in Connecticut for both Asbestos and Lead Abatement. Gary Stone, the company's General Manager is a Licensed Asbestos Abatement Supervisor, (NY), Certified Lead Abatement Supervisor, Certified Lead Planner Project Designer, and Certified Lead Inspector/Risk Assessor, all in Connecticut.