

## ACM/PACM is identified during construction or maintenance activities. What does an employer have to do?

First, the information on the newly discovered ACM/PACM must be conveyed to the building owner pursuant to Part 602, (k)(4). The information must include the location and quantity of this newly discovered ACM. Second, it must be decided whether abatement of the ACM by a Michigan licensed asbestos abatement contractor will be necessary.

## An employee has disturbed ACM and some of the material is on the floor and/or ground. What should be done?

If the amount of ACM is less than three linear or square feet; thoroughly saturate the debris with water to reduce the release of airborne fibers, restrict entry into the area, and immediately contact a Michigan licensed asbestos abatement contractor to remove the debris.

If the amount of ACM is greater than three linear or square feet, contact your employer. The employer should:

1. Restrict entry into the area and post signs to prevent entry into the area by persons other than those necessary to perform the response action.
2. Shut off or temporarily modify the air-handling system to prevent the distribution of fibers to other areas in the building.
3. Contract with an environmental consultant to evaluate the situation.
4. Contract with a Michigan Asbestos Abatement Contractor to remove the debris.

## Can an employer have one of his/her employees provide the asbestos awareness training?

All custodial and janitorial employees should receive annual asbestos awareness training covering the recognition of all building materials that may contain asbestos, the health hazards associated with asbestos exposure, and the MIOSHA regulations involving asbestos that must be followed. An individual(s) who is knowledgeable of the subject matter must provide this training.

Please be aware, asbestos awareness training must be provided in accordance with Part 305 (j)(7)(iv). Computer/online training courses, videos, and toolbox talks may not satisfy these requirements.

## The MIOSHA Asbestos Program

The MIOSHA Asbestos Program is responsible for ensuring that people who work with asbestos-containing materials are properly trained, licensed, and comply with rules regulating asbestos-related activities. The rules are designed to protect the individual performing the work and the general public.

### For additional information, please contact us at:

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## Asbestos Awareness Training must be provided annually

This brochure discusses the "Asbestos for General Industry" Standard Part 305, 29 CFR 1910.1001 regarding obligations pertaining to asbestos building surveys, notifications, training and housekeeping.

### Background

Asbestos is the name of a group of naturally occurring minerals that can separate into microscopic needle-like fibers. The most common of these minerals are *Chrysotile*, *Amosite*, and *Crocidolite*. Once released into the atmosphere, the size and shape of these fibers permit them to remain airborne for long periods of time and thus contaminate the building environment.

If inhaled, these needle-like fibers can cause three specific asbestos-related diseases: *Asbestosis* (a fibrous scarring of the lungs), *Lung Cancer*, and *Mesothelioma* (a cancer of the lining of the chest or abdominal cavity). These diseases do not develop immediately after inhalation of asbestos fibers and typically have a latency period ranging from 15 to 30 years and sometimes as long as 40 to 50 years from first exposure before symptoms appear.

### Asbestos-Containing Materials

Asbestos has been used in more than 3,000 different products over the last 100 years primarily because of its thermal insulating, fire retardant, and chemical resistant properties. Some common products in buildings that contain asbestos include but are not limited to pipe insulation, floor coverings, ceiling tile, spray-on insulation, boiler wrap insulation, wall coverings, fire doors, and old electrical wire insulation.

Employees may also be exposed during custodial/maintenance activities in a building

containing asbestos, during the manufacture of asbestos products (such as textiles, friction products, insulation, and other building materials) and during automotive brake and clutch repair work.

### Building Owners and Employers

Building owners often are the only or best sources of information concerning asbestos hazards within their building(s). Therefore, they, along with employers of potentially exposed employees, are assigned specific duties under the asbestos regulations. To comply with these regulations, a thorough asbestos inspection must be conducted of all pre-1981 building facilities. This survey must identify the presence, location and quantity of asbestos-containing materials (ACM) and/or presumed asbestos-containing materials (PACM) within the building.

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### What should a building owner and employer do if the building doesn't have an asbestos survey?

If the building owner does not have a survey, the building owner should contact an environmental consulting firm that has Michigan accredited asbestos building inspectors to conduct an asbestos building survey.

If an employer leases space and the building owner does not have a survey, an option for the employer would be to hire an accredited asbestos inspector to conduct an asbestos survey of the leased area. This limited survey will help ensure the safety and health of employees in the leased area. It is important to recognize however that the building owner is legally obligated to complete a comprehensive building survey for all asbestos materials in the building.

The information obtained from a comprehensive asbestos building survey will assist a building

owner in fulfilling their notification obligations pertaining to construction and maintenance work activities [i.e., Part 602, (Asbestos Standards for Construction) 1926.1101 (k)(2)(ii)] and also to building housekeeping personnel [i.e., Part 305, 1910.1001 (j)(2)(iii)].

#### Is an employer responsible to ensure that employees have asbestos awareness training?

Yes. Pursuant to Part 305, *Asbestos for General Industry Standard, section (j)(2)(iii)*, housekeeping employees must be advised of the building components they maintain, which may expose them to asbestos. Section (j)(7)(iv) also requires an employer to provide asbestos awareness training to the custodial and/or janitorial staff. Asbestos awareness training assists custodial and janitorial staff in identifying ACM/PACM and in understanding the information contained within the survey. Asbestos awareness training helps ensure that employees do not inadvertently disturb asbestos-containing materials. It also addresses requirements under the standard pertaining to housekeeping activities.

#### What if an employer discovers a building material that may contain asbestos?

All work activities that may disturb a suspect material must cease until a sample of the material has been obtained and analyzed. Due to the sampling procedures that must be followed and the varying number of material samples that must be obtained, an accredited inspector should be contacted to obtain the sample(s). Work that will disturb this material should not continue until the suspect material has been proven to be negative or has been properly abated.