



Asbestos hazards in demolition, renovation, and salvage

Asbestos is responsible for more worker deaths than any other workplace disease.

Asbestos is a hazardous material. Demolition or renovation of houses containing asbestos products can release asbestos fibres, which are extremely fine and can stay in the air for hours.

Unprotected workers exposed to asbestos-contaminated air can breathe in the fibres. This may cause serious health problems – including *lung disease* and *cancer*.

What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a strong, fire-resistant mineral fibre. In the past, asbestos was used as insulation against heat or noise and for fire protection. It was also added to materials such as cement and plaster to give them more structural strength.

Where was asbestos used in older homes?

Until the late 1980s, more than 3,000 products containing asbestos were used in house construction. The drawing on the back of this page shows potential sources of asbestos once commonly used in residential construction. When demolishing older houses, there is a high probability of encountering asbestos-containing materials, which may release asbestos fibres.

What are my responsibilities as an employer or owner/builder?

Employers and owner/builders are responsible for ensuring the health and safety of all workers working for the employer and of any other workers present at the workplace. They are also responsible for protecting the public.

WorkSafeBC has specific regulations that must be followed covering:

- Demolition (Part 20 Occupational Health and Safety Regulation)
- Asbestos (Part 6 Occupational Health and Safety Regulation)

What do I have to do before work begins on the demolition, renovation, or salvage of buildings or structures?

WorkSafeBC OHS Guideline G20.112 explains the hazards associated with the uncontrolled release of asbestos. It also provides information for owners, employers, consultants, workers, and other involved persons on:

- What constitutes a compliant asbestos inspection
- Arranging for and confirming the safe abatement of asbestos
- What to do if more materials suspected to contain asbestos are encountered during demolition or salvage work

The employer, owner/builder, agent, or property manager must have a qualified person inspect the site to identify any asbestos that may be handled, disturbed, or removed. OHS Guideline G6.6-3 outlines the acceptable qualifications for persons conducting asbestos hazard assessments.

What should I do if I find asbestos-containing material (ACM)?

1. All ACM must be properly removed and disposed of by trained and qualified asbestos removal workers before demolition, renovation, or salvage work begins.
2. A notice of project for asbestos (NOPA) must be submitted to WorkSafeBC at least 24 hours before asbestos removal, demolition, renovation, or salvage work begins.
3. After the asbestos removal, the owner or employer should receive written confirmation that the asbestos specified for removal on the NOPA has been properly removed.

Asbestos survey and removal companies can be found in the Yellow Pages under Asbestos Abatement & Removal, Health & Safety Consultants, or Environmental Consultants.

If asbestos-containing materials that were not identified during the inspection are found during work activities, **stop work immediately!** Have trained and qualified workers remove these materials before resuming work.

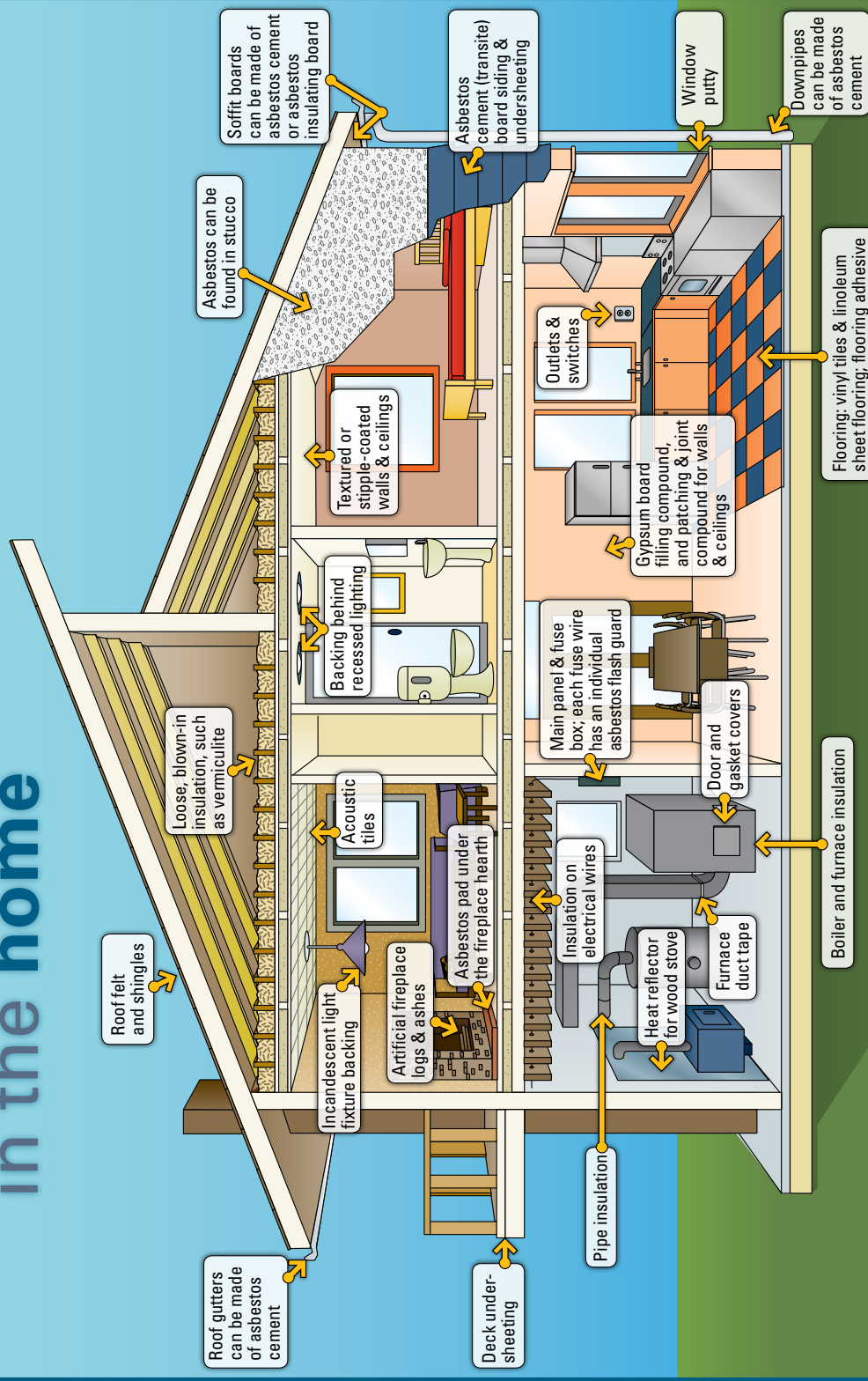
Where can I find additional information about asbestos and NOPA forms?

WorkSafeBC.com offers the following resources:

- The booklet *Safe Work Practices for Handling Asbestos*
- Safety at Work centre for Construction
- OHS Guideline G6.8: Procedures for abatement of asbestos-containing material during house and building demolition/renovation
- Notice of Project Form for Asbestos or Lead
phone: 1 866 319-9704
fax: 604 232-9703, toll-free fax 1 888 232-9714
e-mail: customer.service@worksafebcstore.com

Potential sources of asbestos in the home

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Please note: This floor plan depicts a typical older home. Asbestos use has declined significantly; homes built before 1990 are more likely to contain asbestos products.

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