

Asbestos: Though restricted, it's still around! **Check it out before you rip it out!**

Just because its use is restricted in manufacturing in the U.S. doesn't mean asbestos has disappeared from the products we use today. Many countries today still allow the use of asbestos in a variety of products, many of which are imported by U.S. retailers and building supply centers.

As a result, there is no "safe date" of construction to indicate a structure is asbestos-free. Even the newest buildings may include asbestos-bearing materials.

Unfortunately, a recent increase in renovation projects being



An asbestos survey completed prior to the start of a renovation project (as required) found that the insulation wrapping this pipe contains asbestos. The brittle material was safely removed following AHERA guidelines.

conducted without the appropriate permits undermines ORCAA's effort to protect the health and well being of citizens within its jurisdiction, especially those working with, or in close proximity to, asbestos related projects.

In following state and federal law, ORCAA regulates asbestos projects. Because the agency prefers, when possible, to achieve compliance through education rather than by levying a heavy fine, ORCAA offers a **summary of regulatory requirements on the next page.**

Asbestos: Small, but Deadly!

Asbestos refers to a group of naturally-occurring minerals used in many products, including building materials, heat-resistant protective barriers, and insulation.

Asbestos includes chrysotile, amosite, crocidolite, tremolite asbestos, anthophyllite asbestos, and actinolite asbestos.

While the U.S. has restricted many uses of asbestos, many countries still allow its use despite the clear dangers it poses to human health. Some of those asbestos-bearing products made overseas end up in our homes and buildings, so even new construction may feature asbestos-containing materials.

Asbestos stands as one of the grave threats to local air quality and public health. Life-threatening forms of cancer have been linked to asbestos fibers. ORCAA enforces regulations and laws that seek to minimize the danger from asbestos during building renovations and demolitions.

Unfortunately, a recent increase in renovation projects being conducted without the appropriate permits undermines ORCAA's effort to protect the health and well-being of citizens within its jurisdiction. *Please read the **BACK OF THIS NEWSLETTER** for full details on ORCAA's asbestos and demolition permit requirements.*

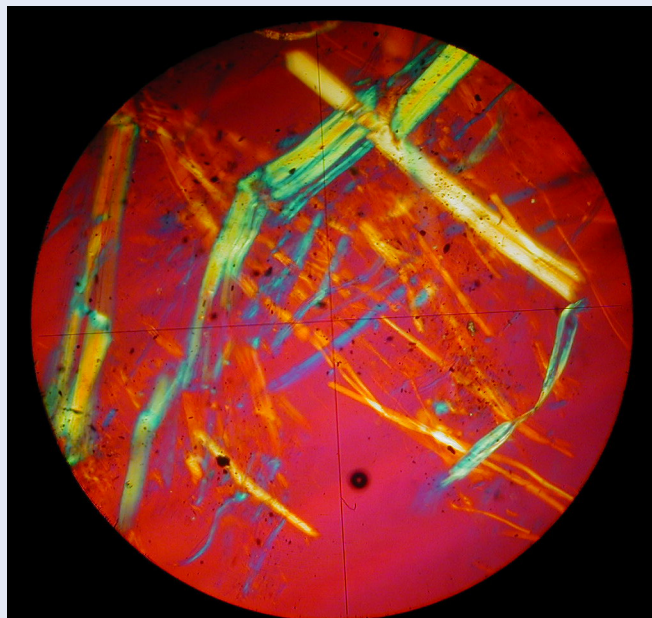


Photo courtesy of Air Quality Environmental, Inc.

Asbestos fibers associated with these health risks are too small to be seen with the naked eye. (above is a microscopic view of a chrysotile asbestos fiber). The inhalation of asbestos fibers can cause serious diseases of the lungs and other organs that may not appear until years after the exposure has occurred. For instance, asbestosis can cause a buildup of scar-like tissue in the lungs and result in loss of lung function that often progresses to disability and death.

ORCAA's Demolition & Renovation Fact Sheet

The Olympic Region Clean Air Agency (ORCAA) protects and enhances air quality for citizens in Thurston, Mason, Clallam, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, and Pacific counties by enforcing federal, state and local air quality regulations.

In following state and federal law, ORCAA must regulate asbestos projects. Because the agency prefers, when possible, to achieve compliance through education rather than by levying heavy fines, ORCAA offers this summary of regulatory requirements.

There are several laws regarding asbestos. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed the National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) to address public exposure to asbestos during demolition and renovation projects, manufacturing of asbestos products, and disposal. The EPA also created the Asbestos Hazardous Emergency Response Act (AHERA) that pertains to asbestos found in schools, that also defines standards for certification and training of asbestos workers. Lastly, the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) protects the safety of workers who handle asbestos.

The asbestos NESHAP regulations

apply to the following:

- All public, commercial, industrial, or institutional structures.
- Residential buildings with more than four units.
- Single family homes to be burned for training purposes.
- Two or more single family homes on a single site to be demolished or renovated for commercial purposes.
- Active or inactive waste disposal sites.

Definitions:

- **AHERA** – Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act. Provides the regulatory framework for asbestos-related inspections and work. <http://www.epa.gov/asbestos/>
- **Demolition** - wrecking or taking out of any load-supporting structural member of a facility together with any related handling operations or the intentional burning of any facility.
 - **Renovation** - altering a facility or one or more facility components in any way.
 - **Structural Member** - any load-bearing beams or walls of a facility; or any non load-bearing member, such as ceilings and non load-bearing walls.



BEFORE DEMOLITION OR RENOVATION –ASBESTOS SURVEYS REQUIRED!

- ORCAA's local regulations apply to ALL structures, *including residential homes*.
- An AHERA Survey of all areas affected by renovation or demolition is REQUIRED and must be conducted by an AHERA-Certified Inspector.
- Submit an ORCAA permit application at least 10 working days prior to the start date.
- ORCAA Demolition/Renovation permit required for any project (removal of load-bearing member or structure), even if no asbestos is present.
- Asbestos permit required for removal or disturbance of more than 10 linear or 10 square feet of Asbestos Containing Material (ACM).

REMOVE ALL ACM FROM THE AFFECTED AREAS

1. AHERA-Certified Workers must remove the ACM, and a Certified Supervisor must be on site.
2. Must remove ACM using wet methods. No visible emissions are allowed during removal.
3. If there is a demolition by means of Fire Training, the ACM must be removed prior to burning.

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