

What is asbestos?

There are different types of asbestos. The most common are white, brown and blue asbestos, but be careful as they all appear white and therefore they must all be treated as dangerous.

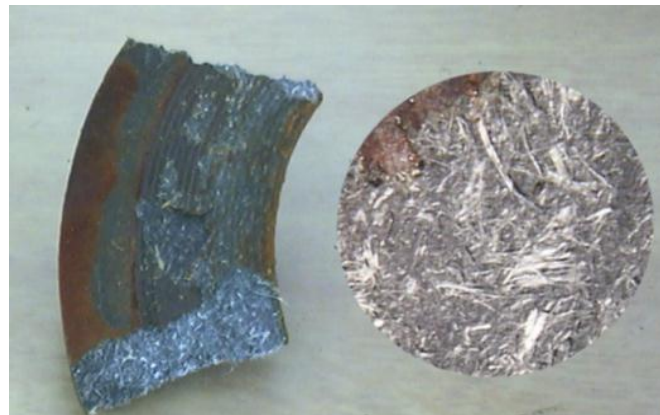
Asbestos has been used extensively throughout the world for insulation boards in buildings, asbestos cement roof sheeting and cladding, drainage pipes and guttering, sprayed coating, pipe lagging and even some flooring tiles. In the past it has been dumped widely and so you may encounter it on site

How do I get harmed by Asbestos?

Asbestos can only injure a person through inhalation. If there is asbestos in the ground, on equipment or clothing this can be disturbed and you could breathe the fibres in. Because asbestos fibres are rod shaped they get stuck in the lungs causing disease.

Did you know?

Asbestos is a silent killer. Since 1968 50,000 workers have died of asbestos exposure, with a further 3,000 dying every year up to 2010. After 2010 the death rate will start to fall.



Typical asbestos products

What illness is caused by asbestos and how long does it take to show up?

Mesothelioma is a cancer of the lining of the lungs. It is considered to be exclusively related to asbestos exposure. By the time it is diagnosed, it is almost always fatal. Mesothelioma has a long incubation period of at least 15 and sometimes as long as 60 years.

Asbestosis is a scarring of the lung tissue.. This leads to inadequate oxygen intake to the blood.. It is a slowly progressive disease with a latency period of 15 to 30 years.

Lung Cancer is a malignant tumour of the Lungs. The tumour grows through surrounding tissue, invading and often obstructing air passages. Again, the disease has a long incubation period – typically at least 20 years.

How can you avoid these diseases?

If you suspect the presence of asbestos, stop work immediately and inform your supervisor. Never touch or disturb Asbestos.

Q. What typical asbestos products could you find on a construction site?

Q. If you identify any type of asbestos in your work areas what should be your course of action?