



## COMPLIANCE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

### A Home Owners Quick Guide to Managing Asbestos

#### What is Asbestos?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral fiber that has been used in more than 3,000 different construction materials and manufactured products. It is commonly found in heating system insulation, decorative spray-on ceilings, vinyl flooring, cement shake siding and a variety of additional materials. Some asbestos containing materials were still being installed in the late 1980's.

#### Why is it a problem?

Breathing asbestos fibers could kill you. When disturbed, asbestos breaks down into fibers up to 1,200 times thinner than a human hair. When inhaled, those fibers become trapped in lung tissues. Medical research tells us that up to 30 years after inhalations, asbestos fibers can cause lung cancer or mesothelioma, a related terminal cancer of the tissue lining the chest cavity. Because asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral and has been used so widely in manufactured products, it can be found almost everywhere. Trace amounts are in the air we breathe every day. Most of us have asbestos fibers in our lungs. There is no known safe level of asbestos exposure. Medical environmental health and regulatory organizations stress the need to protect health by minimizing exposure to airborne asbestos fibers that accumulate at elevated levels. Elevated levels result from uncontrolled disturbances and removals of asbestos materials.

#### How do I know if it has asbestos?

Look for asbestos marking on the product or track the product back to the manufacturer or supplier. If you are unable to confirm, submit a small sample for laboratory analysis. Laboratory analysis is the only sure way to determine the presence of asbestos. **If you wish NOT to have the material analyzed, you should assume it DOES contain asbestos and handle the material according to Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency procedures.**

#### Where to look:

##### Heating Systems

Many home heating appliances and heating systems contain asbestos insulation or gasket materials. It's common to find it as insulation on old furnaces and boilers, heating ducts and hot water pipes. It's also often found in insulating board materials installed

##### Spray-On "Popcorn" Ceilings

This heavy texture application was a common asbestos-containing ceiling treatment from the mid-60's to the mid-80's. It is extremely fragile and easily disturbed.

##### Vinyl Flooring

Sheet vinyl and tiles may contain asbestos if manufactured prior to the mid-80's. Sheet vinyl can be dangerous to remove because it may be backed with felt containing high concentrations of asbestos. Fibers may be released into the air if this backing is disturbed dry. Tiles are generally safer because asbestos fibers are bound up inside the tiles in a petroleum base.



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### Siding

Cement asbestos-board siding is a very dense, brittle product used primarily in the 40's, 50's and into the 60's.

### Miscellaneous

Additional materials that may contain asbestos include "acoustical" ceiling tiles, plaster, stucco, knob and tube wire insulation and artificial fireplace logs and ashes.

### Arranging for Proper Removal and Disposal of Asbestos:

#### Abatement and Removal Procedures:

If you suspect you might have asbestos and would like to have it removed, you must first contact Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency (YRCAA) at 509.834.2050. The following information is available to help you:

- ✓ Do the job within the law.
- ✓ Protect your health.
- ✓ Protect the health of others.
- ✓ Safely and lawfully dispose of the asbestos waste.

#### Disposal and Removal Procedures:

The Terrace Heights Landfill is the only landfill permitted in Yakima County to accept asbestos waste materials. Please contact Yakima County Solid Waste at 509.574.2450 to receive a copy of the Policy and Procedures: Asbestos Waste Material and Special Wastes Shipment Record.

A copy of YRCAA's written determination must be provided to Yakima County Public Services, Solid Waste Division before making disposal appointments. Customers must call the Solid Waste office at least 24 hours in advance to make proper arrangements for disposal.

#### Before planning an asbestos project call:

Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency (509) 834-2050

Yakima County Public Works (509) 574-2475 (for disposal information)

#### Know the Law:

The law requires that you submit a written notification to the Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency ten (10) days prior to the start of any activity that may cause asbestos to be disturbed. The law requires that you utilize certain work methods and/or controls to minimize the potential for asbestos fiber release. The law requires that you package and dispose of asbestos in a certain manner.

**IMPORTANT: Improper removal or disposal of regulated asbestos containing material can result in substantial civil penalties. This information is provided to help you avoid enforcement actions.**