

Draft 3/6/02

Reviewed
by PT
3/7/02

POTENTIAL ASBESTOS QUESTIONS

1) What is asbestos?

“Asbestos” is a name that refers to a family of strong and flexible mineral fibers that can be spun or woven, are relatively indestructible, heat resistant and chemically stable. The six types of asbestos, which vary in size and shape, are actinolite, amosite, anthophyllite, chrysotile, crocidolite, and tremolite. Because of these characteristics, asbestos has been used for a wide range of manufactured goods, mostly in building materials (roofing shingles, ceiling and floor tiles, paper products, and asbestos cement products), friction products (automobile clutch, brake, and transmission parts), heat-resistant fabrics, packaging, gaskets, and coatings. Some vermiculite or talc products may contain asbestos.

2) Does asbestos exposure cause health problems?

Most people do not become ill from exposure to asbestos. Asbestos exposure becomes a health concern when high concentrations of asbestos fibers become airborne and are breathed in over a long period of time. These fibers then become trapped in the airways and lung tissue and the body has difficulty removing them. People who become ill from asbestos are almost always those who are exposed to the fibers on a daily basis, usually as part of their job. As exposure to fibers increases, either by breathing in more fibers or by breathing them in for a longer period of time, a person's risk of disease also increases. After exposure, it can take anywhere from 10 to 40 years for a person to develop an asbestos-related disease.

3) What illnesses are associated with asbestos exposure?

Asbestosis: It is a serious, progressive disease of the lungs associated with long-term exposure to airborne asbestos fibers. It is not cancer. Chances of getting it are very small for those who do not work with asbestos. It irritates lung tissues and causes damage to the tissues (called ‘scarring’). The scarring makes it hard for the lungs to get oxygen into the bloodstream. Symptoms of the disease include shortness of breath and a dry crackling sound in the lungs while inhaling. There is no effective treatment for asbestosis, but symptoms of the disease (like shortness of breath) can be managed under the care of a doctor.

Lung Cancer: Lung cancer causes the largest number of deaths related to asbestos exposure. Cigarette smoking greatly increases the risk of lung cancer in persons exposed to asbestos. The most common symptoms of lung cancer are coughing and a change in one's breathing. Other symptoms are shortness of breath, persistent chest pain, hoarseness, and anemia. However, people who have these symptoms do not necessarily have cancer, but should seek the advice of a physician.

Malignant Mesothelioma: It is a relatively rare, progressive cancer that is found in the thin membrane that lines the lungs, chest, abdomen, and heart. Several hundred cases are diagnosed each year in the United States, most of which are linked with exposure to asbestos. The disease may not show up until many years (generally 20 to 40 years or more) after asbestos exposure.

4) What medical test(s) would show whether I have been exposed to asbestos?
Chest x-rays cannot show asbestos fibers, but can reveal early signs of lung disease. Lung function tests and high resolution CT scans also can detect changes in the lungs caused by asbestos. Note: Changes in the lungs usually are not detectable until years after exposure. The National Cancer Institute indicates that the key to successful treatment of asbestos-related diseases lies in early detection.

5) How can asbestos affect children?
It is not known if exposure to asbestos will result in birth defects of other developmental effects in people. Birth defects have not been observed in animals exposed to asbestos.

More than likely health effects seen in children exposed to high level of asbestos will be similar to the effects seen in adults.

6) How does the law protect me from asbestos exposure?
Decreasing human exposure to asbestos is environmental priority. The City, State and Federal governments have passed numerous laws strictly regulating most asbestos-related work. Highlights of NYC's Program:

Local Law 76 of 1985 ensured that asbestos-related work is performed in a safe manner by properly trained personnel. This program regulates demolition and renovation involving asbestos-containing material.

Local Law 76 also requires an asbestos handling- certificate for each person working on or supervising any construction, demolition or

renovation project disturbing asbestos. To obtain a certificate, an individual must have completed and passed a training program approved by the NYS Department of Health. After the training program, the individual also must pass a NYCDEP exam for certification. The New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) also requires an asbestos-handling certificate for workers.

- As of 12/2/86 anyone without a valid asbestos-handling certificate cannot legally work on any construction, demolition, or clean-up project involving asbestos. People who violate the provisions of Local Law 76 can receive fines per incident. Also, a "Stop Work" order may be issued, if the conduct of the work poses a threat to human safety.
- Workers and supervisors are issued photo identification cards by the NYS Department of Labor (NYSDOL) and the NYCDEP.
- To protect the public and workers from contamination from work disturbing asbestos, e.g., clean-up, construction, demolition, specific safety procedures prescribed by the NYCDEP and NYSDOL must be followed.
- Local Law 70 of 1985 of the City of New York regulates the transport, storage and disposal of asbestos waste.
- Homeowners are advised to hire a NYSDEC licensed hauler to transport and dispose of asbestos wastes. The transportation, storage and disposal of asbestos waste by a licensed carter is regulated by the NYC Department of Sanitation.

7) What do I do if I think the debris in my home contains asbestos?

- Consult with a New York City Certified Asbestos Investigator to survey your home and recommend a course of action. Check the DEP website: www.nyc.gov/dep for a list of certified investigators. If hired, the investigator will do the survey, collect samples, send them to a certified laboratory and give the homeowner/building owner/management owner the results and recommend a course of action.
- Based on the survey results, a resident/building owner/or building manager can hire a contractor licensed by the New York State

Department of Labor (NYSDOL) who employs New York State and/or City Certified Asbestos Abatement Handlers and Supervisors to remove asbestos debris. Ask to see the New York State and City certificate with photo identification of each worker and supervisor. Call the NYSDOL at (212) 352-6000 to confirm that the contractor is licensed. Also check the NYCDEP web site: www.nyc.gov/dep. And, make sure that your contract states that the work will be performed in accordance with all federal, state and local laws.

8) Do I need to be worried about asbestos in the air?

Destruction of the World Trade Center (WTC) buildings released large amounts of dust and ash, some of which contained trace amounts of asbestos. Based on the asbestos air test results to date, the risk of disease from asbestos exposure in the community near the WTC is very low. Experts believe that the levels of exposure to asbestos are low enough that the likelihood of developing disease from the limited, short-term exposures associated with the WTC incident is very small.

For people working and/or living in the surrounding area, DEP issued guidance to building management or the building owner on what must be done to deem a building safe for re-occupancy. These DEP guidelines are still in effect. The NYCDOH issued cleaning guidance for residents of buildings that were deemed to be safe for re-occupancy. This information can be found at the NYC DOH website: nyc.gov/health

While the risk for asbestos-related illness is thought to be very low, residents should take clean-up precautions to further reduce any unnecessary exposure: wet wipe and mop dusty surfaces using a HEPA-filtered vacuum, if possible; remove shoes before entering your home to reduce tracking dust indoors. These reasonable precautions should be taken until the demolition and clean-up at the WTC has been completed.

3/6/02 1- The agenda for tomorrow
Rose

Gilsenan, Michael

From: Roger Hayes
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2002 12:51 PM
To: michaelgi@dep.nyc.gov; Andrea Lyman; Caroline Bragdon; Jennifer Mandel; Katherine Kaye; Nancy Jeffery; Pamela Harmon; Robert Johnson; rosem@nysnet.net; dlongshore@oem.nyc.gov; sbenson@oem.nyc.gov
Cc: Jim Miller; Kevin Mahoney; Reena Mahajan
Subject: Training for Hotline

A few of us met this morning to put together an agenda for tomorrow's training. Please see attached. Let me know if this makes sense or if you have any questions. There are some time frames for specific sections of the agenda which we can modify. The Hotline Keyword Q+A will be the basic document for the training but we will also have binders for specific issues (cleaning fact sheet, info on asbestos, etc.). OEM + DEP folks, please bring additional info as you see fit. The Keyword Q+A is still being finalized but we have a good draft for tomorrow's training.

We have the 3rd floor board room at 125 Worth St. from 9 - 12:30 tomorrow.
 We will video the training so we can have it ready to show additional operators or those who couldn't make it tomorrow.

Roger Hayes



Hotline Training
agenda.doc

(212) 341-9810 (If not available you can speak with Reena Mahajan)

Hotline Training: WTC Related Environmental Concerns March 7, 2002

1. **Introductions:** 9 – 9:15
 - Agencies: OEM, DOH, DEP
 - Hotline operators
2. **Background: Why are we setting up this hotline?** 9:15 – 9:45
 - Description of ongoing coordination among agencies: OEM
 - Community concerns: DOH
 - Ongoing environmental monitoring among agencies: DOH
 - Re-entry + building cleaning policies: DEP
3. **Approaches to Risk Communication** 9:45 – 10:15
 - Basic Communication tips: ATSDR
 - Environmental Risk 101: ATSDR
4. **Results of Air/Dust Monitoring** 10:15 – 10:45
 - Outdoor Air: DOH
 - Indoor Air: DOH + DEP
5. **Review KeyWords/Q+A** 10:45 – 11:45
 - Walk through of script/keywords -
 - Review information in the binder
 - Dealing with specific types of callers
6. **Operational Questions:** OEM 11:45 – 12:30
 - Routing complaints
 - Contacts at other agencies
 - Feed-back + follow-up