

# Asbestos Type 3 operations (high risk)

**Note:** Before giving this safety talk, ensure the type of asbestos operation has been confirmed.

## Explain dangers

Asbestos is a fibre that was used in many building materials up until the 1980s. Some products that are installed today still contain asbestos.

Breathing in asbestos fibres can cause:

- Asbestosis (scarring of the lungs that makes it difficult to breathe)
- Lung cancer
- Mesothelioma (cancer in the lining of the chest and/or abdomen).

There are three types of asbestos operations under Ontario law: Type 1, Type 2, and Type 3.

**In Type 3 operations, there is a high risk that workers will be exposed to asbestos.** Since exposure can occur, workers must take certain precautions.

Asbestos-containing materials (ACM) can be “friable” or “non-friable”:

- Friable ACM is easily crumbled or pulverized with the fingers.
- Non-friable ACM is held together by a binding agent.

## Identify controls

- Do not disturb any ACM until an enclosure has been constructed and negative air is in place.
- Always follow lockout tagout procedures. Electrical power supply in the area should be shut down, isolated, locked, and tagged to prevent electric shock.
- If you notice any openings (e.g., stairways, doors, windows) that are not sealed, report to your supervisor immediately. Sealing these openings prevents asbestos dust from entering other areas.
- Inspect and maintain negative air pressure before any work is carried out to ensure no air is able to leak from the enclosure.
- Do not eat, drink, chew gum, or smoke in areas where asbestos could be present.

- Ensure asbestos warning signs are posted outside and at every entry point to the work area. Make sure signs are not blocked or covered by other objects/materials.
- Never use compressed air to clean the work area.
- Clean protective clothing (such as rubber boots and reusable coveralls) by damp-wiping or HEPA-vacuuming before leaving the work area.
- Damp-wipe or HEPA-vacuum any tools or equipment before removal from the work area.
- Drop sheets, polyethylene sheets, and enclosure materials must be wetted before they are placed in a container for disposal.
- Do not place waste materials with sharp edges into a bag. Instead, neatly stack these items, wrap them together with two layers of polyethylene, and then place into a suitable asbestos waste container.
- Treat used towels as asbestos waste, and dispose of them in a sealable container.
- Before tearing down the enclosure, ensure clearance air testing has been completed. Exceptions include:
  - Work done outdoors
  - Work done on non-friable ACM using a power tool with no HEPA vacuum
  - Work done in a building that will be demolished, with no other workers entering aside from demolition workers and removal workers.

## Demonstrate

Using the owner’s record or report of asbestos (if applicable), review the following with your crew:

- The location(s) of ACM on the jobsite.
- Any areas that should be avoided.
- Specific procedures to follow, such as:
  - Having signage to warn others of the work.
  - Setting up an enclosure with: negative air pressure (0.02 inches of water); polyethylene sheeting to protect furnishings that cannot be removed from the enclosure; all openings sealed.