

ASBESTOS GUIDELINES

What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a mineral fiber that was used commonly in a variety of building construction materials for insulation and as a fire retardant.

Where is asbestos found?

Most products today do not contain asbestos; the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has banned several asbestos products. Any product made today that still contains asbestos is required to be clearly labeled. However, many types of building products and insulation materials made before the 1970's contain asbestos. These products include pipe and furnace insulation materials, asbestos and cement shingles, siding, and roofing, millboard, resilient floor tiles, the backing on vinyl sheet flooring, and floor tile adhesives, patching and joint compound, fireproof gloves, automotive brake pads and linings, clutch facings and gaskets.

What are the health effects of asbestos?

The most dangerous asbestos fibers are too small to be visible. They can become airborne when asbestos-containing materials are disturbed or during improper removal. Once they are inhaled, the fibers can remain and accumulate in the lungs. Breathing high levels of asbestos fibers can lead to an increased risk of lung cancer, mesothelioma and asbestosis.

How can I tell if you have asbestos?

The only way to tell if an object contains asbestos, by looking at it, is if the material is labeled. Otherwise, you should have it sampled and analyzed by a qualified professional. Until you have received the results, treat the material as if it contains asbestos. Samples should be extracted only by a qualified professional, if improperly done extracting samples can be more hazardous than leaving the material undisturbed.

How should I handle asbestos?

Usually it is best to leave asbestos material that is in good condition alone. Generally, material in good condition will not release asbestos fibers. Try to prevent the material from being damaged, disturbed, or touched.

Can I remove asbestos from a structure myself?

USEPA recommends that when dealing with materials containing asbestos, whether it is to test, repair, or remove, you hire an asbestos professional to do the work for you. Improper handling of asbestos material can create more of a hazard than if left undisturbed. If you need to take corrective measures, you should use a different contractor than the one who tested for asbestos in order to avoid conflict of interest.

Before you decide on an asbestos professional, ask potential contractors to document their completion of a federal or state approved training program. Also, ask for references from previous clients to learn if they were satisfied. To guard against costly, hazardous, and unnecessary removals, know what services are available and what procedures and precautions are needed to do the job safely.

Disposal options for Alachua County residents:

Alachua County residents should contact the Alachua County Solid Waste Division at the **Leveda Brown Environmental Park and Transfer Station** to get advice on disposal options for Asbestos waste.

Phone Contact: 352-334-0172 Fax 352-334-0177
Address: 5115 NE 63rd Ave., Gainesville, FL

For more information:

EPA toll free hotline: (800) 471-7127

EPA asbestos web site: <http://epa.gov/asbestos/pubs/ashome.html>

Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Air Resource Management: Jacksonville, FL (904) 256-1700

FDEP asbestos webpage:

http://www.dep.state.fl.us/air/about_air/pollutants/asbestos.htm

Consumer Product Safety Commission

Washington, D.C. (800) 638-2772. Information concerning the identification and abatement of asbestos hazards in the home

Information on asbestos in certain consumer products is also available.

If you have any question regarding Household Hazardous Waste, please contact [Kurt Seaburg](#) at (352)-334-0440 or the ACEPD at (352)-264-6800.