DEQ Asbestos Regulations – What is Required?

Background of Asbestos

Asbestos is the name of a group of naturally-occurring minerals that can separate into microscopic needle-like fibers. The most common of these minerals are *Chrysotile, Amosite*, and *Crocidolite*. Once released into the atmosphere, the size and shape of these fibers permit them to remain airborne for long periods of time and thus contaminate the building environment.

If inhaled, these needle-like fibers can cause three specific asbestos-related diseases: *Asbestosis* (a fibrous scarring of the lungs), *Lung Cancer*, and *Mesothelioma* (a cancer of the lining of the chest or abdominal cavity). These diseases do not develop immediately after inhalation of asbestos fibers and typically have a latency period ranging from 15 to 30 years, and sometimes as long as 40 to 50 years, from first exposure before symptoms appear.

Asbestos-Containing Materials

Asbestos has been used in more than 3,000 different products over the last 100 years, primarily because of its thermal insulating, fire retardant, and chemical resistant properties. Some common products in buildings that may contain asbestos include, but are not limited to, pipe insulation, vinyl and asphalt floor materials, ceiling tile, spray-on fire proofing, roofing materials, boiler wrap insulation, fire doors, plaster walls, and old electrical wire insulation. Employees, tenants, and custodial maintenance workers may be exposed to ACM during maintenance, renovation, or disturbance activities.

Asbestos cement pipes - used for air ducts/chimneys/water piping and plumbing vents.

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Asbestos Control Program
1-406-444-5300

(Please note – this information is current as of September 2012; asbestos requirements may change as rules are reviewed and revised.)

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ASBESTOS REGULATIONS

THINK ASBESTOS BEFORE TRAINING BURNS

State and Federal Asbestos Regulations and Controlled Burns

November 2013

Montana Department of Environmental Quality

State and Federal Asbestos Regulations and Controlled Burns

Fire departments use older buildings/houses for controlled burns during fire fighter training. This training allows a unique opportunity for fire fighters to experience a realistic situation for fire training. This brochure attempts to explain asbestos-related regulations for such training exercises which are not recognized as emergency situations.

The state and federal asbestos regulations that apply to controlled burns are the National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) and the Administrative Rules of Montana, Chapter 74, subchapter 3.

NESHAP is enforced by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality Asbestos Control Program (DEQ). Because NESHAP views controlled burns as a demolition activity, NESHAP regulations apply to controlled burns. Of particular importance is the need to notify DEQ prior to a controlled-burn training exercise. Please contact DEQ at 406-444-5300 for specific NESHAP requirements.

DEQ Asbestos Regulations – What is Required?

Frequently Asked Questions:

A building/house is given to the fire department for training exercises. Should it be used for a controlled burn?

If the fire department wishes to use the building/house for a controlled burn, an asbestos building inspection by an accredited Montana (MT) asbestos inspector must be performed. This inspection/survey will denote the presence, quantity, and location of all asbestos-containing material (ACM). The ACM must be removed by a MT-accredited asbestos abatement contractor prior to the controlled burn.

Finally, once all ACM has been appropriately removed, the fire fighters may utilize the building/house for a controlled burn.

The building/house is inspected for asbestos and it contains friable asbestos-containing pipe insulation and non-friable asbestos-containing roofing. Can it be utilized for search and rescue training?

The building/house may be utilized for search and rescue training as long as the ACM is not disturbed. However, the fire fighters cannot cut through the roof or disturb the asbestos-containing pipe insulation.

In summary, if a building/house is given to the fire department for training purposes, what are the two options?

A. Hire a MT-accredited asbestos inspector to inspect the building/house and a MT-accredited asbestos abatement contractor to remove the ACM. Once abated, the building/house may be used for a controlled burn or search-and-rescue training.

B. Have the building/house inspected and leave the ACM in place. The building/house may be used for search-and-rescue training if the ACMs are not disturbed.

How can DEQ assist fire departments with asbestos-related issues?

When a building\house is inspected by a MT-accredited asbestos inspector, the inspector should be knowledgeable in the Montana regulations and be able to detail the options available. DEQ always welcomes questions and can assist fire departments in better understanding their responsibilities.

Additionally, if a member of the fire department obtains Asbestos Inspector training and applies for accreditation, DEQ can provide guidance and compliance assistance to ensure fire fighter safety.

What other agencies might affect us?

In addition to DEQ requirements, the DEQ Air Quality and Solid Waste Programs, the Occupational Safety and Health Department (OSHA), and Department of Labor and Industry also have requirements in place to maintain fire fighter and public safety during training burns.