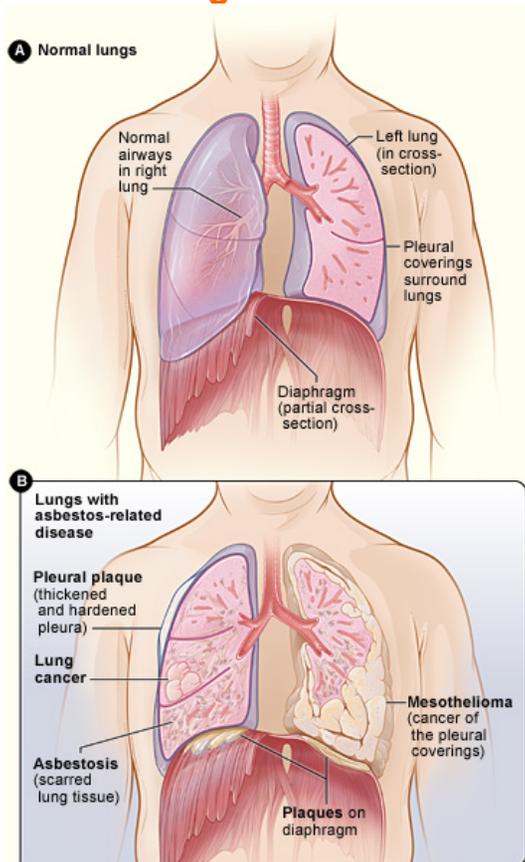


How does asbestos cause health problems?

Asbestos can cause health problems when inhaled into the lungs. When products containing asbestos are disturbed, thin, lightweight asbestos fibers are released into the air. Also, the disturbance may have resulted in the fibers being deposited into other area of the home. Persons breathing the air may breathe in asbestos fibers. Continued exposure increases the amount of fibers that remain in the lung. Fibers embedded in the lung tissue over time may result in lung diseases such as asbestosis, lung cancer, or mesothelioma. Smoking dramatically increases your risk of developing illness from asbestos exposure.

Asbestos-Related Lung Diseases



Where else might I find asbestos in my home?

- Steam pipes – Straight runs and fittings
- Boiler insulation - “Mud” with cloth
- Furnace – “Octopus” style
- Duct Work – Complete or seams only
- Transite Siding – 1’ x 2’ panels
- Textured paint - “popcorn” appearance
- Roofing Shingles – diamond shaped
- Floor Tile / Mastic – Typically 9” x 9”
- Linoleum Floor – Backing Material
- Interior Wall & Ceiling Insulation
-and many other possible locations

Where can I get more information?

Visit the EPA’s Asbestos Home Page:

www.epa.gov/asbestos/



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VERMICULITE ATTIC INSULATION

and other asbestos-containing materials in your home.



What is vermiculite insulation?

Vermiculite is a naturally occurring mineral that has the unusual property of expanding into worm-like accordion shaped pieces when heated. The expanded vermiculite is a light-weight, fire-resistant, absorbent, odorless material. These properties allow vermiculite to be used to make numerous products, including attic insulation.

Do I have vermiculite insulation?

Vermiculite can be purchased in various forms for various uses. Sizes of vermiculite products range from very fine particles to large (coarse) pieces nearly an inch long. Vermiculite attic insulation is a pebble-like, pour-in product and is usually light brown or gold in color.

Is vermiculite insulation a problem?

Prior to its close in 1990, much of the world's supply of vermiculite came from a mine near Libby, Montana. This mine had a natural deposit of asbestos which resulted in the contamination of the vermiculite.

Attic insulation produced using vermiculite ore, particularly ore that originated from the Libby mine, may contain asbestos fibers. Today, vermiculite is mined at three U.S. facilities and in other countries which have low levels of contamination in the finished material.

What should I do if I have vermiculite attic insulation?

DO NOT DISTURB IT. Any disturbance has the potential to release asbestos fibers into the air. Limiting the number of trips you make to your attic and shortening the length of those trips may help limit your exposure.

The EPA strongly recommends that:

- Vermiculite insulation be left undisturbed in your attic. **Due to the uncertainties with existing testing techniques, it is best to assume the material contains asbestos.**
- Children should not be allowed to play in an attic with open areas of vermiculite insulation.



Vermiculite insulation in an attic, hidden under fiberglass batt insulation, a common application.

- If you plan to remodel or conduct renovations that would disturb the vermiculite, hire a professional that is trained, licensed, and certified to handle asbestos in order to safely remove the material.
- In order to safely remove vermiculite, the work area must be isolated under a “negative pressure” environment in order to contain the airborne asbestos fibers.
- You should **never attempt** to remove the vermiculite insulation yourself. This could potentially spread asbestos fibers throughout your home, putting you and your family at risk of inhaling these fibers. Common “dust masks” are **not effective** against asbestos fibers.

Planning a remodeling project?

It is always best to identify any potential encounter with asbestos *prior* to beginning your project. The older your home is, the more likely that asbestos-containing materials were used. Take the necessary precautions and educate yourself. Once a “fiber release” has occurred, it may be very difficult to eliminate the potential health risks to you and your family.