



## **Frequently asked questions for Homeowners of Single-family residences**

### **Who**

#### **Who can remove asbestos containing material (ACM) from a single-family residence in Maryland?**

Non-friable asbestos containing material can be removed from a single-family residence by a licensed asbestos contractor, a non-licensed contractor, or the homeowner. If the ACM will be made friable or is already friable (materials that can be crumbled, pulverized, or reduced to powder by hand pressure) then it should be removed by a licensed asbestos contractor.

A list of licensed asbestos contractors in Maryland can be found at the Maryland Department of the Environment website. Here is the link

<http://www.mde.state.md.us/programs/Air/Asbestos/Documents/AsbestosLicenseContractorList10-19-10.pdf>

#### **Who can take samples of asbestos containing material from a single-family residence?**

The homeowner can take a sample or they can hire a consultant to conduct a survey and take samples of the materials to a laboratory for analysis. Here is the link for certified asbestos labs  
<http://ts.nist.gov/Standards/scopes/programs.htm>

A list of consultants can be found at the Maryland Department of the Environment website. Here is the link <http://www.mde.state.md.us/programs/Air/Asbestos/Documents/consultantList.pdf>

#### **Who can remove my asbestos roof?**

If a contractor will be cutting, abrading, sanding or grinding 5,850 square feet or more of roofing material it needs to be done by a licensed asbestos contractor.

### **What**

#### **What precautions should a homeowner take when removing their asbestos siding and/or tile?**

Use wet methods and wear PPE like a respirator and protective disposable clothing.



## **When**

### **When should asbestos containing material be removed?**

Asbestos should be removed if the asbestos containing material is more than slightly damaged or if you are going to make changes in your home that might disturb it.

### **When are single family private residences subject to any part of 40 CFR Subpart M, including the provisions of the standard addressing intentional burning?**

Assuming that the residential building was never used for commercial purposes, a demolition or renovation activity isolated to that building is not subject to the asbestos NESHAP. If any residential building is being demolished by fire for fire training purposes, then the building is deemed to be an institutional building, and is subject to the asbestos NESHAP.

### **When should the homeowner notify about a demolition of a house?**

If the house was used for a commercial purpose, has more than four apartment units, the demolition includes two homes, the home is being demolished for a commercial building or for a highway/road construction.

## **Where**

### **Where can I find a list of licensed asbestos contractor in the Maryland?**

A list of asbestos contractors licensed by the Maryland Department of the Environment can be found on the MDE website or by clicking this link.

<http://www.mde.state.md.us/programs/Air/Asbestos/Documents/AsbestosLicenseContractorList10-19-10.pdf>

### **Where can I take asbestos containing material after it has been removed?**

You can dispose of non-friable ACM at landfills that accept non-friable waste. Homeowners and/or their certified asbestos contractors must dispose of waste asbestos materials properly. Disposal requirements for commercial contractors also apply to homeowners, whether they do the work themselves or have a contractor do it. Landfill operators are required to handle asbestos wastes separately from other wastes, so it is important to contact them prior to disposal. Non-friable asbestos is accepted for disposal by many landfills as long as the landfill operator is contacted for approval prior to disposal. Some landfills choose not to accept any asbestos-containing materials for disposal.

## **Why**

### **Why doesn't the EPA regulate the removal of asbestos from individuals' homes?**

Single family housing units are not subject to the regulations. Buildings with four or fewer dwelling units are specifically excluded from the definition of facilities to which asbestos regulations apply. If a demolition operation involving a group of residential structures is under the control or supervision of a single entity (i.e., the City), then the owner or operator is subject to the asbestos NESHAP.



## **Why doesn't MDE regulate the removal of all asbestos from individuals' homes?**

Maryland Department of the Environment doesn't regulate the removal of all asbestos in homes because single family residences are not subject to the regulations.

## **How**

### **How might I be exposed to asbestos fibers?**

Asbestos can enter the environment from weathered natural mineral deposits and fiber releases arising from manmade asbestos products. Asbestos may be found in products like floor tiles, roof shingles, cement, and automotive brakes. Electrical, plumbing, acoustical, and structural insulation applications are also very common. Asbestos fibers are released into the air when these products are disturbed.

### **How are broken pieces of material classified? The resulting pieces still can't be reduced to powder by hand pressure.**

When non-friable materials are broken, many times, the edges at the break have become friable. The amount of damage that a non-friable material can sustain before being classified as RACM must be determined on a case-by-case basis.

## **More questions**

### **1. Can I place vinyl siding over asbestos siding?**

Yes, if the homeowner does it. No, if a non-licensed will be doing the work.

### **2. Can I remove the siding from the single family residence myself?**

YES

### **3. Can I remove the asbestos containing floor tile from single-family residence?**

YES

### **4. Can I remove and/or sample friable asbestos (insulation, popcorn ceiling, etc) by myself?**

Yes, but it is not recommended and to do so is at your own risk. It is highly recommended to have the removal, repair, and sampling done by trained and accredited asbestos professionals that are qualified in handling asbestos and disposal of asbestos.

### **5. I've been feeling sickly and there is asbestos in my home/office, is the asbestos causing my illness?**

The latency period for an asbestos-related disease is between 20 to 50 years after exposure, therefore, any immediate health symptoms you're experiencing are probably related to something else. You should contact a physician to discuss possible allergies or other health problems as well as an environmental inspection specialist to evaluate your home.



**6. Can MDE stop my neighbor from removing his/her asbestos containing siding and/or tile?**

NO. MDE does not regulate non-friable materials, which are materials that cannot be crumbled, pulverized, or reduced to powder by hand pressure, in a single-family residence.

**7. Can I dispose of ACM with the rest of my trash?**

NO. Homeowners and/or their certified asbestos contractors must dispose of waste asbestos materials properly. Disposal requirements for commercial contractors also apply to homeowners, whether they do the work themselves or have a contractor do it. Landfill operators are required to handle asbestos wastes separately from other wastes, so it is important to contact them prior to disposal.

Non-friable asbestos may be accepted by any landfill as long as the landfill has included it in their approved waste acceptance plan. Contact the landfill operator for approval prior to transporting the waste for disposal. There are no state regulations regarding the packaging of non-friable asbestos for disposal, though local landfills may have their own requirement

**8. Can MDE test my suspect ACM?**

NO

**9. Can MDE take air samples because the contractor I hired may have done something incorrectly?**

NO



# Recommendations for the Removal of Transite Siding, Asbestos Flooring & Asbestos Roofing

Transite Siding - First, mist the material with water to reduce the chance of fibers becoming airborne. Next, the material should be removed with as little breakage as possible. This can be done by cutting off the heads of the nails or screws that hold the siding in place and sliding the panels away from the wall. Once the material is unfastened from the wall, carefully lower the siding to the ground. Finally, wrap the siding and seal it with duct tape.

Asbestos Flooring - There are several methods for safely removing asbestos flooring material. One such way is to use heat to loosen the flooring from the subfloor. While holding a heat gun over an edge of the flooring, use a putty knife to lift the asbestos flooring away from the subfloor. Continue heating and lifting small areas at a time until the material is completely free. Once the asbestos flooring has separated from the subfloor, the material should be wetted down and wrapped in plastic. Another method for removing asbestos flooring is to use a putty knife to pry the flooring up while continually wetting the material. The water should keep any fibers that are released from becoming airborne. Dry ice can also be used to freeze the adhesive holding the flooring to the subfloor. When the adhesive freezes, the floor covering should be released from the subfloor.

Asbestos Roofing - Asbestos roofing shingles can be removed as a non-friable material provided it is not severely damaged during removal. Asbestos-containing asphalt shingles can be removed by prying the shingles away from the nails and lowering them to the ground. As in all asbestos removals, the material should be wet during the project. However, on steep pitched roofs, too much wetting may result in a slick surface increasing the chance of a fall. If it is not safe to wet the material during removal, extra precautions should be taken to remove the material with as little breakage as possible. Once the material is lowered to the ground, it should be misted and wrapped in plastic.

Although the removal of friable asbestos-containing material in private residences is not generally regulated, MDE does not recommend that any person engage in such activity unless trained to do so. Contractors specializing in asbestos abatement can be found at this website under [List of Contractors](#) or in your local yellow pages.

Taken from: [http://www.scdhec.gov/environment/baq/asbestos/general\\_information.asp](http://www.scdhec.gov/environment/baq/asbestos/general_information.asp)

## Links

**Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control  
Air Quality Management Section**

**How to Properly Remove Cement Asbestos Board Siding**

<http://www.dnrec.delaware.gov/whs/awm/SiteCollectionDocuments/AWM%20Gallery/Air%20Quality/Asbestos/Asbestos%20Removal%20Procedures%20for%20Home%20Owners%20-%20Siding%20final09-06.pdf>

**EPA**

**Asbestos: Protect Your Family**

<http://www2.epa.gov/asbestos/protect-your-family>

**Maryland Department of the Environment**

**Asbestos**

[www.mde.state.md.us/asbestos](http://www.mde.state.md.us/asbestos)



# Guidance Photographs

The following series of pictures of floor tile removal projects is for illustrative purposes. The floor tiles in all these pictures were removed using hand tools by licensed asbestos abatement contractors.

[Photo #1: Removed using a putty knife and a hammer](#)

[Photo #2: Removed with an ice chipper](#)

[Photos #3 & 4: Removed with dry ice and an ice chipper](#)

[Photos #5 & 6: Removed with hand tools and is friable](#)

[Photo #7: Removed using an ice chipper and is friable](#)

[Photo #8: Removed nonfriably and then placed in a lined fiber drum](#)

[Photo #9: Removed nonfriably with potential to become friable](#)

**Photo #1** - This asbestos-containing floor tile was removed using a putty knife and a hammer. The tile remained in whole pieces with little breakage.



**Photo #2** - This asbestos-containing floor tile was removed with an ice chipper. The tile remained in whole pieces with little breakage.



**Photos #3 & #4** - The asbestos-containing floor tile in these photos was removed with dry ice and an ice chipper. Too much breakage is occurring to the floor tile. If the project continues in this manner, it is considered a regulated project, subject to all MDH asbestos regulations. MDH recommends stopping the current removal method and changing to a method that reduces breakage.



**Photos #5 & #6** - The floor tile in these photos are friable. It was removed with the hand tools that can be seen near the top of Photo #6. Floor tile being removed in this manner must be removed according to the MDH Asbestos Abatement Rules.



**Photo #7** - The floor tile was removed using an ice chipper and is friable. Floor tile being removed in this manner must be removed according to the MDH Asbestos Abatement Rules.



**Photo #8** - The floor tile in this picture may have been removed nonfriably and then placed in a lined fiber drum. The work crew used a hand tool to break up the floor tile in order to fit more into the drum. The floor tile has now become friable during the handling process. The floor tile needs to remain nonfriable from removal until it is disposed of.



**Photo #9** - The floor tile in this picture may have been removed nonfriably. Even though the floor tile was removed as a nonfriable material, it has the potential to become friable during the handling process. The floor tile needs to remain nonfriable from removal until it is disposed of.



Guidance Photographs from <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/asbestos/floortile/>

