

## Managing asbestos in buildings

### **Potential hazard:**

Asbestos presents a potential cancer and lung disease hazard for persons breathing in asbestos fibres that have been released into the air.

### **How to control the hazard:**

To control exposure to asbestos at the workplace, building owners, employers and workers need to know these key things:

- The first step in controlling exposure to asbestos is to identify and create an inventory of all asbestos-containing materials in the building. Note: any material likely to contain asbestos is considered to be asbestos-containing material until it is determined to be asbestos-free.
- The next step is to inspect all asbestos-containing material identified in the inventory list and determine if any damage exists.
- Any staff who are expected to work with or near asbestos must be trained in safe work procedures before they begin this work.

### **Identify and create an inventory of asbestos-containing material:**

Building owners and employers must ensure that a competent person creates an inventory of all asbestos-containing materials in the building. The inventory can be completed by reviewing the building's architectural plans and performing a walk-through inspection of the building. (The table on the reverse of this bulletin will give you an idea of common uses of asbestos in building construction and insulation.)

### **Inspect all asbestos-containing material for damage:**

After all asbestos-containing material has been identified and listed (inventoried) it must be carefully inspected for damage. If damage exists, building owners and employers must decide on the safest method of addressing this damage, based on the use of the asbestos (e.g. thermal insulation, ceiling tile, etc.), amount of damage, potential for asbestos fibres to be released into the air (creating an exposure hazard), etc.

Although the method to address any damaged asbestos material must be decided on a case-by-case basis, some methods include:

- Removing all or part of the asbestos (abatement)
- Sealing the surface of the asbestos (encapsulation)
- Building an air-tight barrier over the asbestos (enclosure).

### **Safe work procedures:**

Before any work begins with or near the asbestos material, building owners and employers must develop and put safe work procedures in place to eliminate or control potential worker exposure to asbestos. Workers must be trained in these procedures, according to their job duties, and comply with these procedures.

While some workers may only need to know where the asbestos material is located, and to be careful not to disturb or damage the material, workers who are expected to work with or near the asbestos material (e.g. maintenance staff) will require more specific training on the use, storage, handling, removal and disposal of asbestos at the workplace.

(see over)

### **SAFE Work Manitoba contact information:**

Winnipeg: 204-957-SAFE (7233)

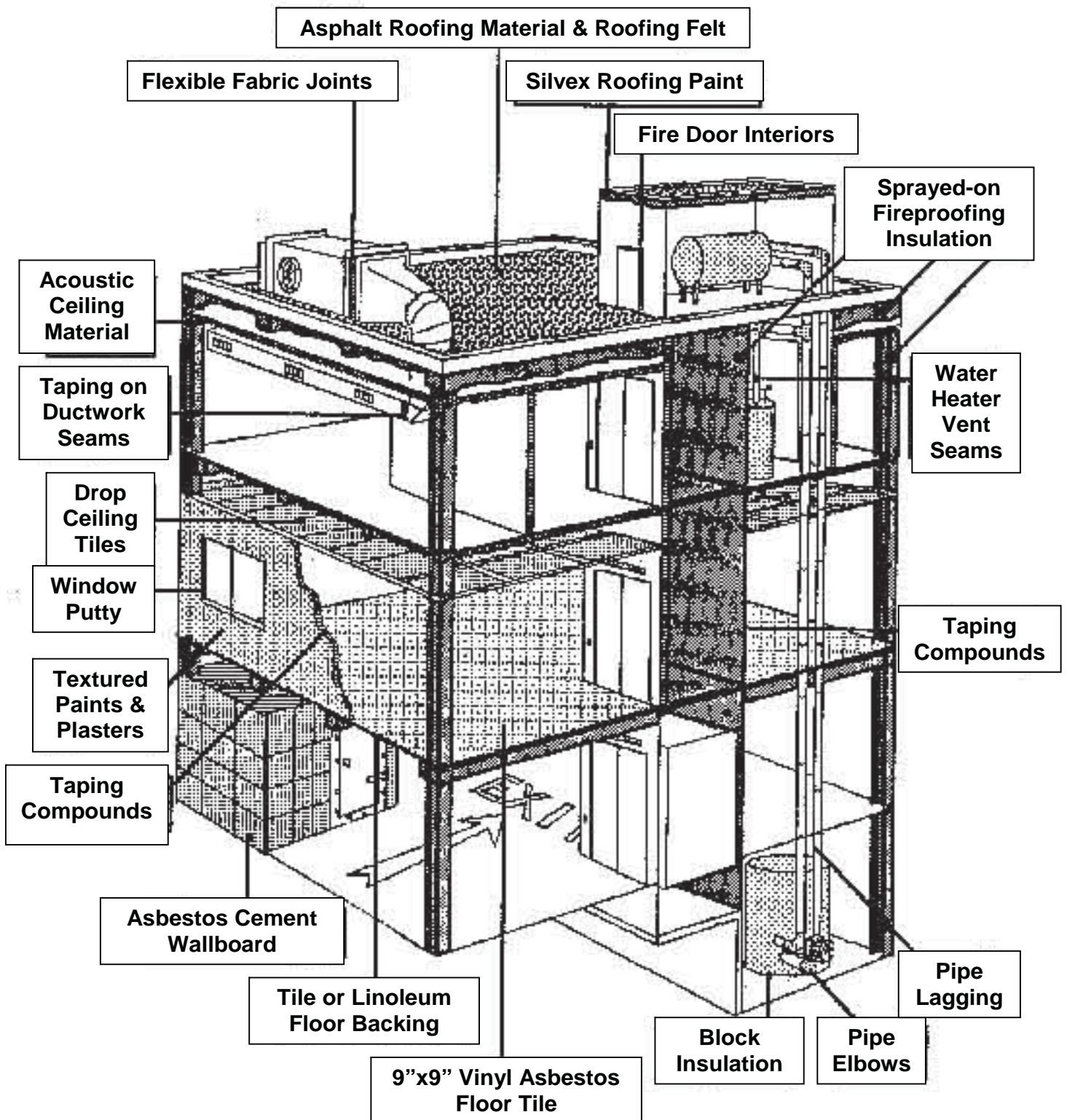
Toll-Free: 855-957-SAFE (7233)

Publications and resources available at: [safemanitoba.com](http://safemanitoba.com)





## Asbestos Containing Materials in Buildings



Original Graphic by: Pacific Information Center, University Extension  
**University of California, Berkeley**

### Reference to legal requirements under Workplace Safety & Health Regulation:

- Asbestos: Manitoba Regulation 217/2006 Part 37
- Guideline for an Asbestos Operations and Maintenance Program
- Guideline for Working with Asbestos

Additional Workplace Safety & Health information available at: [safemanitoba.com](http://safemanitoba.com)

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