



## What is the hazard?

Asbestos was used in more than 3,000 different construction materials and manufactured products. Friable asbestos products may have been installed in homes and businesses as part of new construction or remodeling through the early 1980s. This includes vermiculite insulation.

When asbestos-containing materials (ACM) are disturbed, asbestos can break down into very fine fibers. When the fibers are inhaled, they can cause diseases such as lung cancer, mesothelioma and asbestosis.

There is no known safe level of asbestos exposure. Because of this health threat, any ACM disturbed must be handled properly, put into containers and disposed of -- even if it is damaged due to flooding!

*Feel free to use this information,  
but please credit the North Dakota  
Department of Environmental Quality.*

## Are all buildings regulated?

- All institutional, commercial, public and industrial structures, installations and buildings are regulated.
- Residential buildings, including condominiums or individual dwelling units operated as residential cooperatives, with more than four dwelling units are regulated.
- Single-family residences are usually exempt; however, if a group of residences under the same ownership or project is demolished or renovated as part of a flood project, they may be regulated.

Please contact the North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality (NDDEQ) for clarification.

**\*NOTE** - OSHA regulations apply to all workers, even if NDDEQ asbestos regulations do not.

Please consult OSHA if you have employee-related questions about asbestos or clarification on OSHA.

## *I have a regulated building with flood damage. What do I do first?*

An asbestos inspection must first be performed by an NDDEQ licensed inspection firm.

A list of these firms can be found on the department's website at:

<https://deq.nd.gov/publications/WM/Asbestos/AsbestosContractors.pdf>

Samples collected for the inspection must be taken by a North Dakota certified asbestos inspector. These samples can have the asbestos identified only by using a microscope. Depending upon what the inspection determines, you may be required to have a North Dakota-certified asbestos abatement contractor remove materials from your building even though they have been damaged due to flooding.

## *Where can I get a list of licensed inspectors and contractors and any necessary forms?*

All information can be obtained by calling the NDDEQ Division of Waste Management at 701-328-5166 or visiting: <https://deq.nd.gov/WM/Asbestos/>

## *What if I don't comply with regulated building requirements?*

Failure to comply may result in enforcement actions. Both the building owner and the contractor share the responsibility of making sure these requirements are met. In some cases, individuals and companies can be prosecuted criminally.



## Vermiculite or Zonolite Insulation

Vermiculite or “Zonolite” attic and wall insulation was used in numerous commercial buildings across the nation, including in North Dakota, and often contains asbestos. Vermiculite is a naturally occurring mineral and the insulation is easy to identify. It’s pebbly and loose and resembles very lightweight gravel or small packing peanuts. It looks like shiny, small pieces of popcorn and is usually light-brown or gold in color. Most other types of insulation are fibrous or woolly. Vermiculite insulation may be poured inside framed walls or cinder (concrete) block walls, as well as spread out between attic rafters or under floors.

