



SCHAEFER NEWS

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Asbestos, the very name makes many people nervous. It's a hazardous material that can kill; who wants a home with asbestos in or on it?

There is no doubt that asbestos is a hazardous material and can cause certain types of lung cancer; however, like most environmental health issues, a lack of knowledge can cause undue concern in some cases. Over the years we have often had to answer questions and concerns regarding asbestos containing materials found both on the exterior and interior of the home. In this news letter we will be addressing one of those materials found on the exterior of the home, and try to provide answers to the most common questions we are asked.

ASBESTOS-CEMENT SIDING

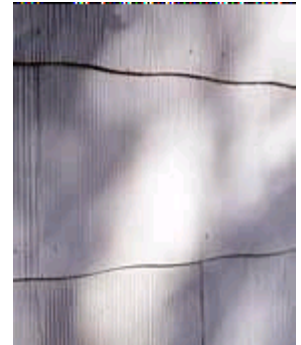
A little history: Asbestos-cement products could be found in the U.S. from about the 1920's on. Around 1940 a construction boom was underway and the use of asbestos-cement in building products boomed as well. Far from the feared health risk some see it today, it was celebrated as a kind of miracle material. It could be produced to look like wood for siding and roofing homes, therefore just as attractive. However, it was fireproof and termite proof, where as wood is not. Because of this, the view point of that time was, a home with asbestos-cement siding or roofing shingles was considered safer than a home with wood. Sales did well, about a billion sq. ft. produced for building materials by the 1950's

ASBESTOS-CEMENT PRODUCTS

THE DEATH OF ASBESTOS-CEMENT SIDING PRODUCTION:

In 1970 the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was established. Use of asbestos-cement products, including siding and roofing, continued to grow for another three years. Production and sales came to a crashing halt when the EPA implemented the first ban on asbestos in 1973.

Once celebrated as a wonder material, making homes safer from fire, wood destroying insects and rot; asbestos was now considered a hazardous material.



ASBESTOS-CEMENT SIDING & ROOFING - A HAZARD?

The EPA defines an asbestos containing material as a potential hazard when it becomes "friable." Friable means the asbestos containing material can be crumbled, pulverized, or reduced to powder by hand pressure. In this condition, the asbestos fibers can be released into the air and breathed in, which of course is the hazard to our health.

With any asbestos containing material, the EPA recommends that if it is in good condition (not friable), the best thing to do is to LEAVE IT ALONE. Removing or covering it creates a greater potential for the release of asbestos than leaving it untouched when in good condition.

The fortunate thing about asbestos-cement products like siding and roofing shingles, is that it is typically not in a friable condition. The cement binds the asbestos fibers together and prevents release of the asbestos. This is not to say asbestos-cement products cannot be a hazard. It can become a hazard if severe deterioration disturbs the asbestos. Improper handling such as chipping, grinding, sawing, scrapping, or sanding can also release asbestos, creating a hazard.

So what do you do if you have damaged asbestos-cement siding or roofing and you want to repair it, or side over it, or re-roof your home? *(See next page)*

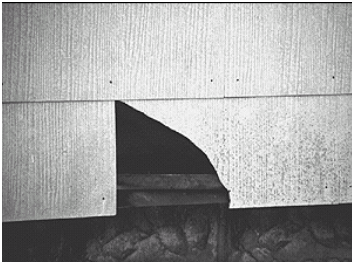
Reading, after a certain age, diverts the mind too much from its creative pursuits. Any man who reads too much and uses his own brain too little falls into lazy habits of thinking.

Albert Einstein

REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE OF ABETS-CEMENT SIDING

PAINTING:

Hairline cracks can often be repaired by inserting a clear epoxy into the crack. Epoxy will not last for ever. Over time it will loose its effectiveness due to Ultra Violet Rays. For cracks that are a little larger, portland cement mixed to a flowing consistency is recommended.



REPAIR:

Hairline cracks can often be repaired by working a clear epoxy into the crack. Epoxy will not last for ever. Over time it will loose its effectiveness due to UV. For cracks that are a little larger, portland cement mixed to a flowing consistency is recommended.

When the siding is actually broken and pieces are missing, then the damaged sections should be replaced (see below for disposal of damaged sections). Since asbestos-cement is no longer manufactured in the U.S. a substitute must be found. According to an article provided to us by both the EPA and the CT Dept. of Public Health, some materials have been manufactured to replicate asbestos-cement building components such as non-asbestos reinforced cement, fiberboard with asphalt, metal and vinyl. However, we do not believe these are easily found and some searching may be required.

SIDING OVER ASBESTOS-CEMENT SIDING WITH VINYL:

You are allowed to side over asbestos-cement siding, it does not have to be removed. Remember, removal is the last option because this is where the greatest potential to create a hazard exists. A covering of insulation board should be applied first, than the vinyl siding can be installed over it.

WARNING:

This newsletter contains information provided by government agencies such as the EPA and the CT Dept. of Public Health.

It was represented to us by an EPA official that there are no Federal laws concerning removal or maintenance of asbestos-cement material. Because of this we were referred to the CT. Dept. of Public Health. They indicated to us that home owners can repair, or remove asbestos-cement material provided certain safety precautions are applied. There are however, State regulations for the disposal of this material.

Although the public may perform these home repairs and improvements, it should be understood that some risk is involved. If you are not absolutely sure you are able to perform these activities safely, you should contact a qualified professional to do them for you.

REMOVAL OF ASBESTOS-CEMENT PRODUCTS

Sometimes removal of asbestos-cement products are necessary. While siding over asbestos-cement siding is preferred there may be times when its removal is warranted. Asbestos roof shingles should not be roofed over. When it is time to re-roof, the asbestos-cement shingles will have to be carefully and properly removed and disposed of.

The Federal government has no regulations on this subject. The State of Connecticut has no laws prohibiting a homeowner or general contractor from removing asbestos-cement siding or roofing as long as they follow these provisions:

- The asbestos-cement material must be disposed as asbestos waste. Waste must be adequately wet, double bagged, labeled with generator name (person doing the removal), and site address. A licensed waste hauler must be used to haul the asbestos. All asbestos waste is sent out of the state.
- Power tools cannot be used – because no cutting, sanding, abrading is permitted.
- A layer of 6-mil polyethylene sheeting should be installed or placed on the ground around the foundation of the building, so that when pieces fall, you will not have to remove soil, just roll up the poly, to contain the asbestos.
- When removing material higher than 15 ft. A chute must be used which is terminated at a covered waste trailer.

The Marvin H. Schaefer Inspection Service is providing this information in hopes of answering the many questions we have received over the years concerning asbestos-cement material. This does not mean we are endorsing the use of these methods to anyone who is not skilled enough to handle this material properly. We cannot determine your own skill level; therefore if you decide to implement any methods mentioned in this newsletter, you do so at your own risk.