



City of Charleston, South Carolina  
Building Code Division

### ASBESTOS INFORMATION

Asbestos is a known human carcinogen and is an airborne hazard. Asbestos fibers can be toxic to humans if inhaled. Once airborne, asbestos fibers can stay suspended in the air for days, weeks or even months before settling out of the air, only to become airborne again because of some minor disturbance. Moreover, asbestos fibers can easily migrate riding the air currents, and it can and will migrate to other areas within and outside of a structure once disturbed. In addition to non-latent hazards, uncontrolled asbestos abatement projects or renovation projects that disturb asbestos may cause latent asbestos hazards that could expose individuals to asbestos in the future, long after the renovation, repair, or demolition activity has occurred. So before beginning a building project that could disturb asbestos containing materials, property owners need to know how to spot asbestos and ensure the safety of those nearby.

Asbestos can be found in a number of building products, including, but not limited to heating system insulation, spray-applied insulation, vinyl floor tiles, vinyl sheet flooring, ceiling tiles, roofing paper and shingles, cement siding shingles, plaster and joint compound.

Pursuant to South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control regulations before any demolition or renovation at a regulated facility may begin, a thorough inspection must be done to detect any asbestos containing materials. This inspection must be carried out by a person licensed by DHEC's Asbestos Section as an asbestos building inspector. If asbestos is found in an area that will be disturbed during renovation, repair, or demolition work, it must be removed properly and disposed of at an approved landfill. These actions also must occur prior to any building demolition project. In most cases, asbestos removal and disposal activities must be performed by a licensed asbestos abatement contractor.

However, the demolition of a private residence containing four or fewer units (i.e., single family home, duplex) is exempt from the above regulations unless the following conditions apply:

- The demolition is part of a larger commercial or public project, such as, but not limited to, highway construction; development of a shopping mall, industrial facility, other private development; or urban renewal, etc.
- The demolition involves multiple private residences within a compact area ("city block") under the ownership and/or control of a single owner and/or operator. Examples would be a municipality clearing a block of houses for urban renewal purposes or SCDOT clearing a row of houses for a highway-right-of-way project.
- The residence is part of an installation such as a military facility, university campus, etc.
- The residence is being burned for fire training.
- The residence has been used in the past for non-residential purposes.

In other words, if homeowners choose to do so, they can remove and repair asbestos containing materials from their home. Homeowners must follow the same work practices and disposal methods a South Carolina licensed asbestos contractor follows. If you are a home owner and choose to undertake the job yourself, you will be fully liable for any harm that may come to yourself and others as a result. Thus, homeowners should use extreme caution when dealing with asbestos-containing materials, and should consider using a licensed asbestos abatement contractor for most removal projects. If a homeowner is unsure if the material in his or her home has asbestos containing fibers, the safest course of action is to hire a South Carolina licensed professional service firm to inspect and sample those suspect materials to confirm the presence of asbestos. A list of these firms is available by contacting the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control.

As a condition of your receiving a building permit, you are required to obey all provisions of laws, ordinances, and regulations governing asbestos detection and removal. Renovation and Demolition permits or approval notices shall not give authority to violate or override the provisions of any other laws, ordinances, regulations regarding asbestos detection and removal. Furthermore, demolition permits or approval notices issued in error or based upon incorrect information supplied to the Division by the homeowner shall be invalid.

I hereby certify that the residence for which this demolition permit applies is a single-family residential dwelling that is exempt from South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control asbestos regulations. I further attest that I have read the above asbestos information and understand its content. I agree to indemnify, defend, hold harmless, and release the City of Charleston, its officers, employees, affiliates, agents, volunteers, successors, and assigns (the "City of Charleston") from and against any and all personal injury, property damage, claims, losses, costs, expenses, damages, awards, or settlements (including the payment of reasonable attorneys' fees) arising out of or resulting from any and all acts or omissions by myself and/or the City of Charleston related to asbestos detection and removal from the structure for which I have applied for a demolition permit. I have been read completely, fully understood, and voluntarily sign below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Property Owner's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Property Owner's Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Property Address