

Pre-Reno Checklist: Identifying Asbestos Hazards in Your Home

Before you swing a hammer or pick up a paintbrush, take steps to protect yourself from asbestos exposure. This checklist will guide you through key areas to inspect for potential Asbestos in your pre-1980s home. Here's a checklist to get you started:

Know the Risk:

- Construction Date:** Homes built before the 1990s are more likely to contain asbestos. National Association of Realtors [invalid URL removed]

Where you could find asbestos	Brief Description	Action
Eaves (soffits)	The overhanging edges of the roof, often now constructed from building materials like James Hardie HardieFlex fibre cement sheeting. Asbestos Fibro materials were commonly used until the Late-1980s	Battens were the most conspicuous asbestos fibro sign on eaves. Timber or asbestos battens. Today's plastic eaves joiner is around 2 mm high. Do not drill, screw, or disrupt batten-covered eaves. A licenced painter or asbestos assessor can identify and test, before you start painting
Asbestos fibro walls	Walls constructed from flat sheets of asbestos cement (fibro). Commonly used in homes built before the late 1980s.	Battens were the most conspicuous asbestos fibro sign on Walls. Timber or asbestos battens. Do not drill, screw, or disrupt batten-covered eaves. A licenced painter or asbestos assessor can identify and test, before you start painting
Interior walls in Laundries & Bathrooms	Walls, particularly around showers and laundry tubs, may have been constructed from asbestos cement sheet (fibro) or coated with textured paint containing asbestos.	Walls with cracks, holes, or water damage should be left alone. Avoid wall sanding, drilling, and disturbing. Hire a licenced asbestos assessor for testing and abatement if renovating or repairing walls.

<p>Flooring (vinyl tiles, linoleum backing, carpet adhesive)</p>	<p>Floor materials used in older homes. Asbestos was often used as a binder in these materials.</p>	<p>Leave undisturbed. Do not drill, sand, or remove. If considering new flooring, hire a licensed asbestos professional for assessment and abatement (if necessary).</p>
<p>Insulation (loose-fill, vermiculite attic insulation, sprayed-on insulation)</p>	<p>Materials used for thermal insulation in older homes. Vermiculite insulation can sometimes contain asbestos contamination.</p>	<p>Leave undisturbed. Do not drill into or disturb insulation. Hire a licensed asbestos assessor for testing, especially if your home was built before the 1980s.</p>
<p>Textured paint & Vermiculite (popcorn) ceilings</p>	<p>Common decorative finishes used in homes built before the late 1970s. Asbestos fibers were sometimes mixed into paint to create texture.</p>	<p>Leave undisturbed. Avoid scraping or sanding the ceiling. Hire a licensed asbestos assessor for testing, especially if the ceiling is damaged or planned for renovation.</p>
<p>Building materials (roofing shingles, siding, transite panels around pipes or ducts)</p>	<p>Various building components used in older construction. Asbestos was used in some types of shingles, siding materials, and fireproofing around pipes and ducts.</p>	<p>Leave undisturbed. Do not drill into, cut, or remove these materials. Hire a licensed asbestos assessor for testing, especially if the materials are damaged or planned for renovation.</p>
<p>Patching compounds & joint compounds</p>	<p>Used for patching walls and ceilings, especially in older homes. Some patching compounds may have contained asbestos fibers.</p>	<p>Leave undisturbed if in good condition. If sanding or removing patching compounds is necessary, wear proper personal protective equipment (PPE) and consult a licensed asbestos professional for guidance.</p>

<p>Vinyl wall coverings & wallpaper adhesives</p>	<p>Used in some older homes for decorative purposes. Adhesives used for wallpaper installation may have contained asbestos.</p>	<p>Leave undisturbed if in good condition. If removing wallpaper or vinyl wall coverings is necessary, dampen the material to minimize dust and wear proper PPE. Consider hiring a licensed asbestos professional for testing, especially for pre-1980s wallpaper.</p>
<p>Cement pipes & water heaters</p>	<p>Used for plumbing and drainage systems in older homes. Asbestos fibers were sometimes used to reinforce cement pipes and water heater insulation.</p>	<p>Leave undisturbed. If planning to replace pipes or a water heater, consult a licensed plumber familiar with asbestos abatement procedures.</p>
<p>Lagging (asbestos wrap) around hot water pipes</p>	<p>Used for plumbing and drainage systems in older homes. Asbestos Lagging was sometimes used to insulate pipes from freezing in winter</p>	<p>Leave undisturbed. If planning to replace pipes or a water heater, consult a licensed plumber familiar with asbestos abatement procedures.</p>
<p>Mastics & caulking materials</p>	<p>Used for sealing windows, doors, and other building components. Some mastics used before the 1980s may have contained asbestos.</p>	<p>Leave undisturbed if in good condition. If removing or replacing caulking is necessary, wear proper PPE and consider hiring a licensed asbestos professional for testing, especially for pre-1980s materials.</p>
<p>Appliances (ovens, ranges, toasters)</p>	<p>Less common, but some older appliances may have contained asbestos components for insulation.</p>	<p>Research the specific model and year of your appliance to determine if asbestos is a potential risk. If unsure, consult a licensed asbestos professional for testing before repairs or disposal.</p>