

ASBESTOS AND GYPSUM DRYWALL

Do not expose your family and neighbourhood to the hazards of asbestos. When beginning a renovation or demolition project find out if the drywall in your home contains asbestos.

Drywall installed pre-1990 may have asbestos.

Until about 1990, the tape and joint compound, or 'mud', used to seal the seams and fill gaps between drywall boards sometimes contained asbestos. Asbestos-containing material is safe if left intact. When it is disturbed or damaged, asbestos fibres are released in the air. When inhaled this may lead to asbestos-related diseases such as asbestosis and mesothelioma, which develop many years after the person has been exposed.

Before renovating:

Find out: Was the drywall in your home installed before or after 1990?

- If after 1990, and you have documentation like a building permit and inspection report, then you can safely remove it.
- If before 1990, have the drywall tape and joint compound tested for asbestos (this involves sampling by a qualified person and analysis by an accredited laboratory).

If your drywall was installed before 1990, have it tested for asbestos:

A list of relevant consultants and laboratories can be found at metrovancoverrecycles.org by searching 'Asbestos Testing'.

If testing confirms you *do not* have asbestos:

Asbestos-free drywall can be recycled.

- Visit metrovancoverrecycles.org and search 'Gypsum / Drywall' for a list of facilities or private haulers that may accept gypsum for recycling.
- Contact the facility or hauler ahead of time for hours, rates, and other requirements such as laboratory results confirming that the material is asbestos-free.

If testing confirms you *do* have asbestos:

- Contact an abatement company to properly manage the removal and safe disposal, OR
- Contact a competent consultant for guidance on how to carefully remove it yourself, wearing appropriate protective equipment, and containing the release of the asbestos into the air so as not to contaminate the rest of your home.
- Go to metrovancoverrecycles.org and search 'Asbestos Abatement' for a list of asbestos abatement/disposal companies or consultants.

For further information on working with asbestos, visit WorkSafe BC at worksafebc.com