

# ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT

DO YOU KNOW IF THIS APPLIES TO YOUR OPERATIONS?

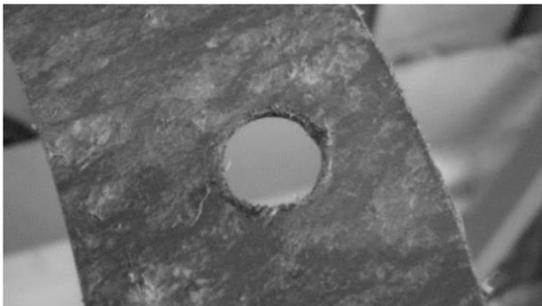
SAFETY BULLETIN

ISSUE# 01-2020

## WHAT IS ASBESTOS

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral that has excellent strength and insulating properties. It is composed of fibres with the potential to become airborne in elevated concentrations, if disturbed or in poor condition.

Asbestos fibres enter the body primarily by way of inhalation and because the fibres are very small, they bypass the lung's defenses. The body's reaction to asbestos in the lungs is the progressive formation of scar tissue that can lead to occupational diseases such as asbestosis, lung cancer and mesothelioma. These diseases contribute significantly to workplace fatalities in the oil and gas industry.



Example of asbestos gasket

## LOCATION OF ASBESTOS

Asbestos can be found in thousands of materials. Most are in older oil and gas buildings and equipment; however, some less friable (not easily crumbled) materials that still contain asbestos may have recently been used within the oil and gas industry such as:

- Gaskets
- Valve packing materials (rope)
- Tar mastic sealants/adhesive used with foam glass insulation on refrigeration equipment

## REGULATORY CHANGE

In 2018, the federal Government of Canada created the Prohibition of Asbestos and Asbestos Products Regulations under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. This law prohibits the import, manufacture, sale and use of all types of asbestos.

This new law does not apply to some circumstances, such as mining residues, asbestos in use prior to the in-force date of the regulations (December 30, 2018), scientific research, and use in museum displays.

## CONNECTION TO LIFE SAVING RULES

Hazardous energy sources include pneumatic, hydraulic, mechanical, gravitational, chemical, electrical, nuclear, thermal or any other energy that could cause injury. Types of asbestos are assigned chemical abstract numbers and, as such, are defined as chemicals.

One of [Energy Safety Canada's Life Saving Rules](#) is Energy Isolation, which consists of the following:

**Verify isolation and zero energy before work begins**

- I have identified all energy sources
- I confirm that hazardous energy sources have been isolated, locked, and tagged
- I have checked there is zero energy and tested for residual or stored energy

Other Life Saving Rules that apply are Work Authorization and Bypassing Safety Controls.



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## WHAT CAN SUPERVISORS DO?

- Ensure asbestos surveys (testing, risk assessment, etc.) have been conducted for older buildings and equipment as well as store inventories of non-friable materials.
- Have an asbestos exposure control plan in place if asbestos-containing materials are present in your operations.
- Label asbestos-containing materials so that they are not unintentionally disturbed in the absence of adequate controls.
- Ensure your company has processes in place to prohibit the purchase or use of asbestos.
- Understand and adhere to your organization's process for managing change in facilities and equipment.

## WHAT CAN WORKERS DO?

- Know if and where asbestos is in your operations.
- Do not disturb asbestos-containing materials unless you are competent to do so and have the proper equipment and personal protective equipment.
- Stop work and notify your supervisor if asbestos is going to be disturbed in the absence of adequate controls.
- Intervene when co-workers are not authorized to disturb asbestos-containing materials.
- Exercise your right to refuse dangerous work. Often, situations can be easily resolved by speaking to your supervisor.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Preliminary Fatality Analysis Report](#)
- [Alberta Asbestos Abatement Manual 2019](#)
- [Safe Work Practices for Handling Asbestos, WorkSafeBC](#)
- [Prohibition of Asbestos and Products Containing Asbestos Regulations](#)
- [Life Saving Rules](#)
- [Life Saving Rules Explanation Guide](#)

## PRESENT LIKE A PRO

### Before you begin:

Understand the topic and how it applies to you and your team.

Research your own company's experience and provide examples that pertain to your work areas.

If you're not able to answer a question, find the information and make sure you follow up.

Consider the audience. Are they familiar with the topic and the terminology?

### Involve the group:

Ask them to identify where, if any, asbestos-containing materials exist in your operations.

Discuss how your organization manages asbestos and controls exposure.

Discuss how your organization prevents the import, manufacture, sale and use of asbestos.

Ask the group for ways to improve asbestos management.

