

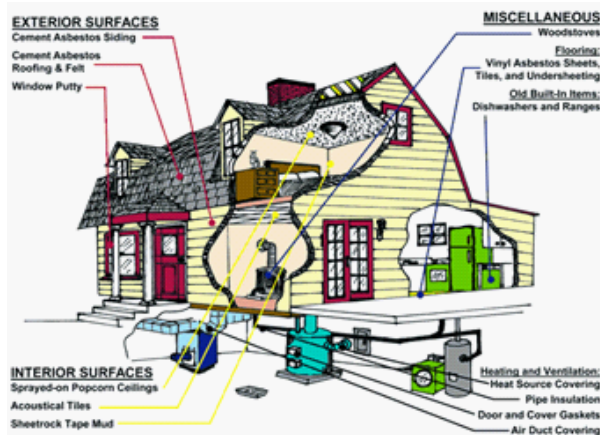
SAFETY AWARENESS FOR INSPECTION STAFF

As a Building or By-law inspector, you could be exposed to numerous unseen hazards in the buildings or areas you are inspecting.

Three of these possible hazards are asbestos, lead and mould.

What is Asbestos?

Asbestos is a strong, fire-resistant mineral fibre. Asbestos was used throughout the inside and outside of buildings, including being added to materials such as cement and plaster to give them more structural strength, and may be present in those built as recently as 1989.



How can you become exposed to asbestos?

Asbestos exposure primarily occurs through inhalation of airborne asbestos fibres. If you enter a building which has been recently renovated and asbestos has been cut, drilled, sanded, etc., without proper procedures being followed, you could be exposed.

Asbestos fibres can stay suspended in the air for hours and appear similar to dust.

What about lead?



Buildings built before 1960 were likely painted inside and outside with lead-based paint. You can't tell if the paint had lead in it simply by looking.

Lead-based paint that is in good condition is generally not a health hazard. Leaded paint that has been sanded and the dust not collected properly, or that is peeling, chipping or cracking, can pose a health hazard.

Why would there be mould spores?

Mould spores grow in damp environments – and could be present where there was high humidity (such as former grow ops) or in a building that has been flooded by sewage or water.



What can you do to lessen your risk of exposure?

- Determine the age of the building you will be inspecting. Structures built prior to 1990 will possibly contain asbestos. Structures built prior to 1960 will possibly contain asbestos and lead-based paint.
- Try to determine if the building was previously a grow-operation.

- Ask the building owner/contractor if there has been a hazardous materials assessment conducted; the assessment may be required by your municipality prior to the work being performed.
- Discuss the possible hazards with the owner/contractor prior to entering the site.

If through this pre-inspection process you believe there are likely no hazards from asbestos, lead or mould prior to entry, but upon entering the building you notice any of these, **LEAVE THE BUILDING** immediately and advise the owner/contractor you will not re-enter until it is safe for you to do so.

If you know that asbestos or lead has been disturbed on the job site:

1. Stop the inspection and leave the site.
2. Advise the building owner or contractor that you will not complete the inspection until proof of professional clean-up, removal or encapsulation can be produced.
3. You have the right to report violations of the Occupational Health & Safety Regulation to WorkSafeBC. To report, call 1-888-521-7233. Please note, if other workers are present that could be exposed, call WorkSafeBC and advise of the situation immediately.

British Columbia
Municipal Safety
Association