

Why Trust Anyone Else?

Asbestos Siding Shingles

Asbestos siding was used extensively in buildings and homes from the 1930s until the 1970s, when its use was banned. Originally, asbestos siding was used because of the fire resistant properties of asbestos. Because asbestos is both a mineral and fibrous material, adding asbestos to siding materials increases strength and durability, while providing some insulation and fireproofing to the structure. When asbestos first came out was called as the “miracle mineral”. It remains, to this day, a very durable product.

If asbestos shingles are on your home and they are in good condition and left undisturbed, they are *usually* NOT a serious problem. The mere presence of asbestos in a home or a building is not hazardous. The danger is that asbestos materials may become damaged over time and become airborne. Damaged asbestos may release asbestos fibers and become a health hazards. Because removal of asbestos siding is lengthy and expensive, repairing broken tiles is usually the preferred solution. Unless you are prepared for the investment it may be suggested that living with the siding, as it is, is not only safe, but economically wise.

THE BEST THING TO DO WITH ASBESTOS MATERIAL IN GOOD CONDITION IS TO LEAVE IT ALONE!

If the asbestos material is in good shape and will not be disturbed, do nothing! Disturbing it may create a health hazard where none existed before. Asbestos cement roofing, shingles and siding products are not likely to release asbestos fibers unless chipping, grinding, sawing, scrapping, or sanding takes place.

There are three types of corrections: repair, cover, or removal.

REPAIR usually involves either **sealing or covering** asbestos material.

- **Sealing** (encapsulation) involves treating the material with a sealant that either binds the asbestos fibers together or coats the material so fibers are not released. This should be done only by a professional trained to handle asbestos safely. **Painting** with a high quality alkali-resistant and weather resistant

exterior paint (i.e., 100% acrylic coating) should be used on exterior asbestos-cement materials, or use pigmented shingle stain. Before being painted, asbestos-cement surfaces should be cleaned, then primed with an alkali-resistant primer.

- **Covering** (enclosure) involves placing something over or around the material that contains asbestos to prevent release of fibers. The most common and least expensive solution is to leave the original asbestos shingles in place; this way you'll avoid the hazardous dust created by tearing the shingles off. Instead, cover the shingles with polystyrene-foam insulation panels, or sheathing, and then hang new vinyl siding over it. Once again this is best left to a professional and not all companies will work with the asbestos siding. You are strongly encouraged to contact your local EPA officials and consult local building codes before you begin to work around asbestos.
- **Removal** requires hiring a professional who knows how and has the equipment to deal with the hazardous material. Your local EPA officials should be able to direct you to an approved company.



Honest Home Inspections cares about the safety of you and your family. That is why we have provided this material on asbestos siding. Share it with the people who share your home. **Be Safe!!**

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