



**Environmental Remedies, Inc.**



## Understanding the Asbestos Abatement Process



## WHAT IS ASBESTOS?

Asbestos is the name given to a group of minerals that occur naturally in the environment as bundles of fibers that can be separated into thin, durable threads. These fibers are resistant to heat, fire, and chemicals and do not conduct electricity. For these reasons, asbestos was widely used in many industries into the late 1970's. As such, many types of building products used in homes, including thermal system insulation, contain asbestos.

For HVAC systems, asbestos is often found as plaster cement wrap around boilers, water and steam pipe elbows, tees, fittings, and pipe runs. Asbestos is also found in tape on duct systems and as a cardboard type of material called aircell found on steam pipe runs.

## WHY SHOULD I BE CONCERNED?

Asbestos is a known human carcinogen. Asbestos fibers that are breathed in may get trapped in the lungs and remain there for a long time. These fibers can accumulate and cause scarring and inflammation, which can affect breathing and lead to serious health problems including lung cancer, mesothelioma, and asbestosis.

That being said, the presence of asbestos in a home does not necessarily mean that a hazardous condition exists. Asbestos material intact poses no risk to your health. Exposure in the home only comes from the release of asbestos fibers into the air by the disturbance of asbestos-containing building materials. This can happen during demolition work or home repair and remodeling, such as an HVAC system replacement. Asbestos exposure is primarily an occupational hazard, and as such, is a regulated construction activity.

## 1. Isolation/Containment

Impermeable plastic sheeting is used to isolate the work areas from the remainder of your home. All vents, returns, and other openings are then sealed, creating a “containment.”



A decontamination chamber is then installed at the entrance of the work area along with warning signs prohibiting access. The size and layout of the containment depends on the location of the access points leading into the work areas.



## 2. Air Filtration

Air filtration devices are installed to draw air from the work area through a HEPA filter, exhausting the filtered air outside and creating negative pressure inside the containment.



The vacuum effect will provide extra protection by preventing the release of dust and debris to outside areas.

### 3. Removal and Decontamination

The accessible asbestos containing ducting is then wetted and carefully removed from the work area using leak tight containers. Complete removal of the ducting component is not always possible. In those cases, the asbestos will be stripped and the remaining component encapsulated for reattachment by your HVAC contractor.



All remaining surfaces are decontaminated using HEPA vacuums, wet wipes, and other tools to eliminate residual dust and debris.

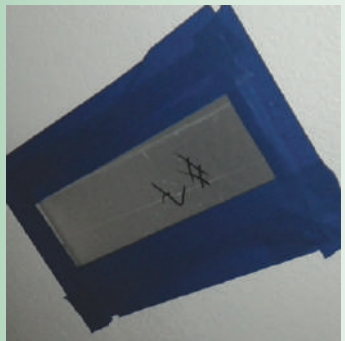


### 4. Tear Down

Upon project completion our team will remove all plastic sheeting and air filtration devices.

As with any asbestos removal project, properly securing containment

areas and the subsequent removal sometimes results in damage to finished surfaces. Please see “Important Notifications” for further details.



## IMPORTANT NOTIFICATIONS

Asbestos abatement, as it relates to HVAC projects, involves work in attics, crawl spaces, and garages. Personal contents in these areas, such as furniture, clothing, boxes, and vehicles need to be removed from the work area prior to ERI's arrival. You may incur additional costs or delays if ERI cannot access the work area.

To ensure dust and debris are controlled, tape and staples are used to fasten the plastic sheeting during the installation of the containment.



Damage to walls, ceilings, wallpaper, wood, and all painted or finished surfaces occurs as a result of containment installation and removal. This damage is unavoidable. ERI does not include the cost of any repairs which may be required as a result of our containment installation.



You do not have to vacate the home during the abatement process. It is perfectly safe to remain present for the duration of the work. However, depending on the location of the access points for attics and/or crawl spaces, the containment may limit customer access

to certain areas of the home. Additionally, the HVAC system will need to remain off for the duration of the work. containment may limit

Once containment is set, only ERI employees may enter the work area. By law, customers or other contractors not certified to perform asbestos related work may not enter the regulated work area. Signage will be placed outside of containment prohibiting access.



## ALWAYS HIRE A PROFESSIONAL

Asbestos removal is complex and highly regulated with very specific removal, handling, and disposal procedures. Improper removal may actually increase your and your family's exposure to asbestos fibers.

ERI understands this process can be concerning. The reality however, is that this is a routine aspect of most HVAC projects. Whenever you make changes in your home that might disturb asbestos, such as having a new heater or air conditioner installed, removal of asbestos containing ducts is best handled by a trained and accredited asbestos professional.

ERI, as a licensed asbestos removal contractor, follows the laws strictly. We would never risk anyone's safety, both yours and our employees, by cutting corners – ever. So, while we understand that abatement services can be disruptive, rest assured that we work diligently to be quick and efficient, without ever sacrificing safety.

While every project has its own unique qualities, the steps outlined inside provide a basic understanding of ERI's abatement process.



Top: Typical asbestos insulated ducting.

Right: Scraped and encapsulated boot (part of HVAC system).



## WHO IS ENVIRONMENTAL REMEDIES, INC?

Environmental Remedies, Inc. (ERI) is a fully licensed and certified abatement firm dedicated to assisting our clients with the safe and legal removal and disposal of hazardous building materials. Since 2004, our family-owned company has completed thousands of asbestos, lead and mold abatement projects for homeowners, contractors, insurance providers and government agencies.

ERI serves clients located throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, including all cities within the seven surrounding counties. At Environmental Remedies, Inc. our mission is simple – to provide exceptional service with quality results.



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## OUR CODE OF CONDUCT

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*ERI is guided by a set of principles that encompass the values and ethics of its family of employees. Our Code of Conduct represents how we treat our customers, our business partners, and each other. Please visit our website to read our entire Code of Conduct:*

**[www.EnvironmentalRemediesInc.com](http://www.EnvironmentalRemediesInc.com)**

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