



**SUSANA MARTINEZ, GOVERNOR**

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Environment Department Warns New Mexicans About the Dangers of Asbestos**

**Santa Fe, NM --** The New Mexico Environment Department is reminding New Mexico residents about the dangers of asbestos that can be found within our homes and buildings.

According to the World Health Organization, 294 people die from asbestos-related diseases worldwide every day, including 28 Americans. Although the use of asbestos has decreased, it is still present in buildings and homes. Adults and children can easily come into contact with asbestos if they are around renovations, remodels, repairs, and demolition work.

Asbestos may be found in any number of places:

- Houses built between 1930 and 1980 likely contain asbestos as insulation as well as wallboard, textures, and many other materials.
- Asbestos may be present in patching compounds used on wall and ceiling joints.
- Artificial ashes and embers sold for use in gas-fired fireplaces may contain asbestos.
- Older products such as stove-top pads may have some asbestos compounds
- Hot water and steam pipes in older houses may be coated with an asbestos material or covered with an asbestos blanket or tape.

The New Mexico Environment Department, along with the non-profit Asbestos Education & Relief, urges residents to take the following precautions:

- Keep activities to a minimum in any areas having damaged material that may contain asbestos.
- Have removal and major repair done by people trained and qualified in handling asbestos.

- Don't dust, sweep, or vacuum debris that may contain asbestos.
- Don't sand, saw, scrape, or drill holes in asbestos material.
- Don't track material into your house that could contain asbestos. If you cannot avoid walking through the area, have it cleaned by a wet mop.
- When in doubt, call a professional.

The New Mexico Environment Department supports proactive approaches towards protecting the public's health and safety through education. We have an opportunity to prevent cancer and save lives from this elusive killer that does its unseen damage in seclusion and can go undetected for decades.

For more information, the Environment Department encourages contact with the Johnny O. Perea Foundation for Asbestos Education & Relief at:

<http://home.comcast.net/~cperea8208/site/>

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