

Asbestos in Construction

Asbestos, used in construction for heat insulation and fireproofing, was known to be a carcinogen and toxic substance for many years prior to leading up to the Environmental Protection Agency's ban on the use of asbestos in building construction. Those that first used asbestos (early Greeks) noticed that it caused respiratory ailments and it was documented in France that it was known to be the cause of health problems. However, with the rise of Industrialization, buildings and home construction increased and the use of asbestos went with it. Its ability to withstand extreme heat and fibrous pieces enabling it to be woven into insulation sheets, deemed it perfect for use in the construction industry to avoid problems with fires and decrease costs for expensive insulation in colder climates. H.M. Murray noted in 1907 that the death of one of a worker working with asbestos on a constant basis could have been in part attributed (if not all attributed) to asbestos, as he examined and found traces of the mineral in the deceased's lungs. In the years following, it seemed to be cover-up after cover-up by companies employing asbestos miners and workers in the construction industry.

Research conducted and medical reports written around the world noted the severe consequences of prolonged asbestos contamination to the human body. However, the use of the substance continued and even companies conducting "research" on the effects of asbestos knowingly removed the word "cancer" from all of their findings. Corporations permitted their workers to have continuous contact when told about the possible health risks of asbestos and potential to claim asbestos related compensation; in fact, they even disregarded information suggesting that workers in physical contact with the fibres wear facial masks to limit their respiratory exposure. In 1989, the United States Environmental Protection Agency released its notes on the required stop-use and removal of asbestos in buildings and products. While this release was overturned by the Supreme Court, agencies such as OSHA have set strict standards for the presence of asbestos in buildings; and the EPA has strict enforcement of the presence of asbestos in drinking water. While the United States and most of the advanced world has nearly stopped its use of asbestos, developing countries still take the risk of exposing their people to this toxic natural mineral by allowing its continued use in construction of buildings and products.

About the Author

There are a plethora of solicitors offering consultancy catering towards asbestos compensation however many people choose Mesothelioma Matters for a specific reason!

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