

## Frequently Asked Lead and Asbestos Questions

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### **How do I know if I have leaded paint on my jobsite?**

If the building was built before 1978, a building survey (taken by an accredited inspector) should be performed. Rumor has it that leaded paint can be found in buildings up to 1985 or later. An accredited inspector can be found by calling the Construction Contractors Board or the Oregon Department of Human Services.

### **Can I use a do-it-yourself lead testing kit?**

Yes, but they can sometimes be misleading. They only test the surface paint—not the other layers below. In addition, these kits cannot determine the amount of lead or the airborne levels of lead on your jobsite.

I do have leaded paint on my construction project. Where can I find the current regulations on how to handle this situation?

In Oregon you must comply with Oregon-OSHA, [www.orosha.org](http://www.orosha.org); the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), [www.deq.state.or.us](http://www.deq.state.or.us); the Construction Contractors Board (CCB), [www.ccb.state.or.us](http://www.ccb.state.or.us); and Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS), [www.Oregon.gov/dhs](http://www.Oregon.gov/dhs). Many of their rules overlap, but they all have unique rules that are designed for their particular jurisdiction.

We had a building survey for lead hazards performed. Our accredited inspector had the paint tested and found that it was only 0.3% total lead. It is less than 1%...do we need to comply with the regulations since it is such a small amount? Yes. Any amount of lead found in lead paint requires that you comply with Oregon-OSHA's regulations. Depending on the project, you may also need to comply with the standards of other governing bodies (see above).

### **How do I know if I have asbestos on my jobsite?**

Buildings built before 1980 are required by DEQ to have a survey performed before any demolition or renovation. The survey must be performed by an Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA)-accredited inspector. They will take bulk samples of the material and determine the amount of asbestos present.

The accredited laboratory reported the asbestos had less than 1%. Does this mean it has asbestos? Yes, it has asbestos (less than 1%), but Oregon-OSHA considers it to be non-asbestos containing. Assuming your building survey was conducted correctly, you can proceed as if it were asbestos-free.

There is a small quantity (less than 10 linear feet) of asbestos on my jobsite. My employees may have to touch it. What type of training do they need? There are four classes (or types) of asbestos work. Class I is the most hazardous and Class IV is the least hazardous. To answer your question you need to compare your situation to the definition of Class III and Class IV asbestos work. Class III work is defined as "repair and maintenance operations, where asbestos containing material, including thermal system insulation and surfacing asbestos containing material is likely to be disturbed." This type of training is 16 hours in length and must be done by a DEQ-certified trainer. Class IV work is defined as "maintenance and custodial activities during which employees contact but do not disturb asbestos containing materials and activities to clean up dust, waste and debris resulting from Class I, II and III activities." This type of training is two hours in length and can be done by AGC's industrial hygienist. The particular type of training needed will depend on your situation.

We obtained a building survey before starting our jobsite. After we started demolition we found some "questionable building materials" that did not look like they had been tested in this report. What do I do? Stop work. Call an accredited building inspector for the material you need to test and have the material tested. Then report the results to the owner and others on the jobsite within 24 hours.

Our company policy is that we do not touch asbestos or lead. Do I need to write that down as “my company policy”?

Yes, and you should include what your employees should do if they run across a questionable material and whom they should contact.

We subcontract all asbestos and lead work. Do I need to have my employees trained in lead and asbestos awareness?

Yes. There is still a good chance that your employees will see or have to deal with these hazards on the jobsite.

**It seems like I am always running across the same problems with my company’s health and safety. Is there any way to make this go away?**

From what I’ve noticed, the contractors who handle health and safety issues the best have a few things in common.

1. Employees trained in hazardous communications – employees know what to do if they find something unusual.
2. Management buy-in – management, including superintendents, project managers, and the safety director, all attend safety training. Management supports the decisions of the employees in the field. If an employee finds a questionable substance which might pose a threat, do you want your employees to work in an area that might have asbestos?
3. A well-laid policy – they have written policy and follow it. They don’t deviate from it, but they do revise it on a regular basis.
4. They ask for help – they may have one of the best plans, but they still use AGC’s safety resources and OR-OSHA consultative services. It is difficult to stay current with the health and safety matters. Trust your health and safety professionals.