



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
HALEY BARBOUR, GOVERNOR
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
Trudy D. Fisher, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Contact: Robbie Wilbur
601/961-5277

MDEQ PROVIDES ASBESTOS AND LEAD PAINT GUIDANCE FOR BUILDINGS DAMAGED BY TORNADOS/FLOODS

(JACKSON, Miss.) – The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) is providing asbestos and lead paint guidance to homeowners and property owners who will be involved in debris clean-up and demolishing damaged buildings due to tornado or flooding damage. Regulations governing the removal of asbestos and lead paint are administered by MDEQ.

● **Asbestos guidance for homeowners:**

Asbestos requirements do not apply for homes being demolished. However, since asbestos is a known carcinogen, homeowners should not breathe in asbestos fibers caused from the demolition and handling of materials such as asbestos-containing floor tile, transite siding, and insulation products. Wet these materials and keep them wet during demolition and handling to reduce breathing in fibers (a garden hose with a spray nozzle or garden canister sprayer will work). These materials should not be crushed, pulverized, abraded, grinded, or sawed.

● **Asbestos guidance for commercial and public buildings:**

1. The building must be inspected by an MDEQ-certified inspector to identify the presence of asbestos-containing materials prior to demolition.
2. If a building is demolished by an order from a state or local government agency because the facility's structure is unsound and in danger of collapse, the removal of asbestos prior to the demolition is not required, but notification to MDEQ is required. Also required are alternative asbestos emission control procedures that include wetting and reduction of excess breakage, an MDEQ-certified asbestos abatement supervisor or contractor for on-site supervision of demolition activity and emission control procedures, and asbestos waste must be disposed in a NESHAP approved landfill.
3. If a building is structurally sound the regulations apply and asbestos abatement procedures must be followed including: sending notification to MDEQ, asbestos removal by work practice standards before demolition, and proper disposal of the asbestos waste.

● **Lead paint guidance:**

1. Homes built prior to 1978 may contain lead in the paint.
2. The lead paint regulations do not apply to the removal of storm damage and debris. However, if homeowners hire renovators and painters in response to flood damage for a house built before 1978, and the renovation work disturbs lead paint, the renovator must have Lead-based Paint Renovator certification from MDEQ.
3. Individuals and volunteers that work on their own homes are not subject to the Lead Renovation and Repair rules; however, they should take every precaution to minimize exposure to lead dust.

The National Emission Standard for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) regulations govern the removal of asbestos and are administered by MDEQ. Also, MDEQ's Lead based Paint Renovation, Repair and Painting regulations address the removal of lead paint. For more information or questions, contact the MDEQ Air Division at 601-961-5171.

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