**What is asbestos?**

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral made up of thin, heat resistant, strong, flexible and very durable fibers which was used widely in industry from the early 1900’s to the 1970’s.

**How might I be exposed to asbestos?**

- Community members who worked at The Carolina Asbestos Company located at the Davidson Depot and manufactured asbestos shingles from the 1930s until about 1960 may have been exposed to asbestos.
- Asbestos fibers may be released into the air by the disturbance of asbestos-containing material during product manufacturing, demolition work, building or home maintenance, repair, remodeling or when soil containing asbestos fibers are disturbed during yardwork or recreational activities.
- People living near the Davidson Mill may be exposed to asbestos in the air if soil was/is disturbed and buried asbestos is released.
- Exposure would occur only when the asbestos-containing material is disturbed in some way to release asbestos fibers into the air.

**How can asbestos affect my health?**

Exposure to asbestos can cause respiratory diseases, often decades after exposure. The three most common asbestos-related diseases are asbestosis, lung cancer, and mesothelioma.

Asbestosis is a buildup of scar tissue in the lungs, causes a stiffening of the lungs and difficulty breathing.

Lung cancer can be caused by a variety of factors, including genetics and other environmental exposures. Asbestos exposure increases your chance of getting lung cancer 5 times more than the average person. Asbestos exposure plus smoking increases your chance of getting lung cancer 53 times more than the average person.

Mesothelioma is a cancerous tumor in the lining of the chest and abdomen.
How can I limit my exposure to asbestos?

- Cover up possible sources of asbestos in your home or yard.
- Prevent dirt and dust from entering your home – remove shoes before entering, wipe pets with a damp cloth.
- Clean surfaces in your home regularly with a wet wipe or mop.
- Materials containing asbestos that are not disturbed or deteriorated do not pose a health risk and should be left alone.

What should I do if I think I have been exposed to asbestos?

- Avoid further exposure.
- Contact your doctor for a physical exam. Your doctor may recommend a chest x-ray to look for evidence of exposure.
- Get an annual flu shot and pneumococcal vaccine.
- Quit smoking.

Additional Information

Contact N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, Health Assessment, Consultation and Education (HACE) program at (919) 707-5900 for additional information.

Local Resources

- **Ada Jenkins Center:** Provides medical and dental care to residents in Davidson, Cornelius and Huntersville. Eligibility is based on income. Phone: (704) 896-0471 Address: 212 Gamble St, Davidson, NC 28036
- **Lake Norman Community Health Clinic:** Provides comprehensive medical services to uninsured and medically indigent residents of Mecklenburg County. Phone: (704) 316-6611 Address: 14230 Hunters Rd, Huntersville, NC 28078
- **Camino Community Center:** Provides primary medical care, mental health services, and health education for uninsured residents. Phone: (704) 596-5606 Address: 133 Stetson Dr, Charlotte, NC 28262
- **Charlotte Community Health Clinic:** Provides medical care to uninsured Mecklenburg County residents. Phone: (704) 316-6561 Address: 8401 Medical Plaza Dr Suite 300, Charlotte, NC 28262

References

