

Asbestos Exposure in Rural Communities

As rural communities are often rooted in working with fertilizers, pesticides, and other needed chemicals, if you live outside of the city, you are most likely aware of the dangerous substances around you. That said, there is one dangerous substance you may have trouble avoiding – asbestos. Asbestos is a natural substance, but it may cause a number of medical problems, such as the rare cancer mesothelioma and a breathing condition known as asbestosis.

Asbestos is found in the air in almost all communities, but at very low rates. The problem with asbestos comes when you have direct, prolonged exposure to the substance. Unfortunately, asbestos was once used in a number of products, many of these products used to build houses, barns, churches, office buildings, and other structures. While cities may be more readily plagued with asbestos problems, these contaminations are found in rural communities as well. Asbestos was once commonly used in:

- Insulation
- Roofing
- Tiles and grout
- Joint compound
- Cement
- Heating ducts
- Pipes and other plumbing materials
- Countertops
- Plaster
- Drywall
- Textiles

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In addition, many of the rural towns in the United States and Canada have dealt with asbestos problems due to mining. Asbestos itself is mined, and, some mining equipment and clothing was once made using asbestos. Just because it is natural does not mean it is safe!

Asbestos Health Problems

If you've been exposed to asbestos, you may develop medical problems, even as much as 20 or 30 years later. These problems can make it difficult to breath, but often, the symptoms are brought on slowly over many years. Therefore, some patients don't realize there is a problem until it is too late. Mesothelioma and asbestosis are both very difficult to treat in their advanced stages. For more information on [asbestos cancer](#) and [pleural mesothelioma](#) please see the resources at Asbestos.com

Be proactive about your health! Avoid asbestos by asking a professional for help with demolition or renovation of older structures. If you believe you've been exposed to asbestos in the past, it is important to see your doctor right away, even if you are currently not experiencing any symptoms. The sooner you catch asbestos-related medical problems, the better your chances are for survival!

For more information on asbestos exposure and abatement please visit the [Asbestos and Mesothelioma Center](#).