



## Asbestos-Free Buildings? Are They Really?

*What you need to know about asbestos—and how the industry has changed in the last decade*

For years, many building owners have assumed that newer buildings or previously “cleared” sites are asbestos-free. In reality, recent findings and regulatory changes tell a different story.

“Asbestos-free” is no longer a safe assumption—it’s a claim that needs proof, context, and upkeep.

Modern asbestos management is about:

- Awareness
- Accurate data
- Maintenance over time
- Protecting workers, occupants, and owners from avoidable risk

### Discussion Topics

#### ACM Awareness (Quick Reality Check)

- **Asbestos is not just an “old building” issue**
  - While use declined after the 1980s, asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) continued to be installed well into the 2000s.
  - Buildings constructed or renovated during this period can still contain ACMs—sometimes in unexpected locations.
- **Why ACMs are still being missed**
  - Older assessments based on limited scope or outdated assumptions
  - Renovations that disturbed or concealed ACMs
  - Reliance on historic reports that didn’t test all suspect materials

Key takeaway: “No asbestos identified” does not always mean “asbestos-free.”

#### New & Emerging Findings - Paints and Coatings

- **Asbestos in paints is getting renewed attention**
  - Recent testing has identified asbestos in:
    - Decorative and textured paints
    - Block filter & compounds on concrete
    - Specialty fire-resistant or durability coatings
  - These materials were historically assumed to be non-ACM and often not sampled.
- **Why this matters**
  - Paints and coatings are frequently affected during:
    - Repainting and maintenance work
    - Sanding or surface prep
    - Demolition and renovations
  - Disturbance can create unexpected exposure risks.

Industry shift: Sampling strategies are evolving to reflect these newly recognized risks.

## Discussion Topics

### The Asbestos Ban – What It Does (and Doesn't) Mean

- **Canada's asbestos ban (2018)**
  - Prohibits manufacture, import, sale, and use of asbestos-containing products.
  - Does not remove asbestos already in buildings.
- **Common misconception**
  - “There's a ban, so asbestos shouldn't be present.”
  - Reality: The ban affects new products only, not legacy materials.

Bottom line: The ban reduces future risk—but today's buildings still require active management.

### How the Industry Has Changed in the Last Decade

- Broader recognition of non-traditional ACMs
- More emphasis on ongoing management, not just surveys
- Increased scrutiny during renovations and capital projects
- Greater owner responsibility—not just consultant responsibility
- Shift toward digital access and real-time information (vs. binders on shelves)

### Regulatory Requirements – What Building Owners Are Expected to Have

Under Ontario regulations, asbestos is a managed hazard, not a one time checkbox.

#### Core expectations include:

- Asbestos Surveys
  - Designated Substance Surveys (DSS)
  - Refurbishment/Demolition surveys where applicable
  - Updated surveys as building conditions change
- Asbestos Assessments
  - Material condition assessments
  - Risk evaluation based on occupancy and disturbance likelihood
- Asbestos Management Programs (AMP)
  - Inventory of ACMs
  - Inspection frequency
  - Response procedures
  - Documentation and record keeping
- Training & Awareness
  - Worker awareness training
  - Contractor communication and notification
  - Clear onsite access to asbestos information (reports, summaries, signage)
- Ongoing Due Diligence
  - Reports must remain accessible, accurate, and current
  - Changes to building use or scope trigger reassessment

## Who Should Attend?

This webinar is ideal for:

- Managers of buildings,
- Workers in buildings,
- Health and Safety professionals and,
- Joint Health & Safety Committee members looking to expand their knowledge

### Expert Panel



**Emily Balfour**

*Project Manager,  
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### Upcoming Webinar Dates

- June 23<sup>rd</sup> - 9:30 am to 11:00 am (EST) - [Reserve Your Seat](#)
- September 16<sup>th</sup> - 12:00 pm to 1:30 pm (EST) - [Reserve Your Seat](#)
- October 14<sup>th</sup> - 12:00 pm to 1:30 pm (EST) - [Reserve Your Seat](#)