

Course Guidelines

**Occupational Health and Safety
for the
Asbestos Worker**

Government of Alberta ■
Employment and Immigration

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GENERAL COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Occupational Health and Safety for the Asbestos Worker

The “Occupational Health and Safety Course for the Asbestos Worker” must cover the basic essentials to protect the health and safety of workers. It is meant to teach basic concepts and provide awareness about the hazards of asbestos. By itself, the course will not ensure the competency of workers as defined by the Occupational Health and Safety Code, since competency is a combination of training **and** experience.

In this document, an *asbestos worker* is an individual who will work with asbestos or will perform asbestos removal or abatement and has no supervisory duties. Workers with supervisory duties will require additional skills. However, all individuals who enter a “restricted area” as defined in the Occupational Health and Safety Code must take this course.

The “Occupational Health and Safety Course for the Asbestos Worker” must meet the following criteria:

- (a) The occupational health and safety portion of a course must contain a minimum of 15 net instructional hours for the theory and practical elements (**see Note**).
- (b) The practical and theoretical elements must be at least 5 net hours long.
- (c) Successful completion of the course requires at least an 80% grade on a written examination and a “pass” rating on the practical portion. Beginning January 1, 2004, the asbestos card issued by training agency expires three (3) years from the date of course completion.
- (d) The content of the course must cover the topics as outlined in Schedule “A”.
- (e) An instructor who is qualified under Schedule “B” must teach the course.
- (f) Trainees must be provided with a copy of the materials as shown in Schedule “C”. Additional learning materials provided to the student must be filed with Alberta Employment and Immigration when an agency applies to become an approved agency.
- (g) The classroom and shop (or field station) must have appropriate equipment and facilities necessary to provide course essentials. Examples included in Schedule “D”.
- (h) Worker re-certification requirements are set out in Schedule “E”.
- (i) Workers with training qualifications from other jurisdictions may challenge the course exam (Schedule “F”).
- (j) An application to become an agency approved to give the course must be made in accordance with the procedure outlined in Schedule “G”. Schedule “G” also outlines administrative responsibilities that agencies must follow.
- (k) Agencies are responsible for issuing replacement cards should a worker’s card be lost or damaged (Schedule “H”).

Agencies must ensure that Alberta Employment and Immigration is notified at least five (5) working days prior to a course.

NOTE: It is expected that a complete course on Asbestos Removal and Abatement would be longer and would include time for job preparation and work procedures. This document only addresses the occupational health and safety component of the training program and does not focus on the

knowledge and skills for the actual removal or abatement procedures. These procedures (e.g. spray on removal, piping removal, glove bagging, enclosure construction, encapsulation options, outdoor work, waste removal, etc.) are probably best acquired through a supervised on-the-job training program over a length of time until the worker is competent in all removal, abatement and disposal techniques. The length of the on-the-job training will vary according to the type and/or level of prior skills brought to the job. This 15-hour portion of the course is meant to prepare a worker to “step on” a worksite that has an asbestos project.

SCHEDULE A
Minimum Course Content

I. Theory

After completion of the training program the student will be able to:

- (a) Identify the health effects associated with exposure to asbestos.
- (b) Understand the effects of smoking on the health of workers exposed to asbestos.
- (c) Explain specific worker responsibilities relevant to asbestos removal work as required in the *Occupational Health & Safety Act, Regulation and Code*.
- (d) Explain general employer responsibilities relevant to asbestos removal work as required in the *Act, Regulation and Code*, including Codes of Practice.
- (e) Define “exposed worker” and state the health assessment requirements for asbestos exposed workers.
- (f) State the Occupational Exposure Limit (OEL) for asbestos.
- (g) List the criteria for evaluating the potential for asbestos contamination of the work area and surrounding area.
- (h) Identify other health and safety hazards on abatement projects not directly associated with asbestos exposure (electrocution, slips, trips and falls, cold, heat, scaffolding, etc.).
- (i) Understand how a Code of Practice is used to select, use and maintain appropriate respiratory protective equipment.
- (j) Understand the procedures and methods used to enclose and isolate the work area.
- (k) Explain how a negative pressure system works.
- (l) Explain the setup of a typical decontamination facility, and the procedures for its use and maintenance.
- (m) Explain the methods for minimizing release of asbestos fibres into the air.
- (n) Describe asbestos waste disposal procedures.
- (o) Consult Code(s) of Practice for a particular worksite and then select equipment, tools and materials according to the specifications.
- (p) Discuss the need for good hygiene practices on the job with regards to eating, drinking, and smoking.
- (q) Discuss emergency situations (e.g. fire, injury) and procedures.

II. Practical

- (a) Discuss the methods for isolation of the worksite.
- (b) Demonstrate enclosure repair techniques.
- (c) Discuss basic principles for testing negative pressure systems.
- (d) Discuss the typical types of asbestos removal equipment and tools used on the worksite.
- (e) Demonstrate decontamination of equipment and facility.
- (f) Demonstrate preparation of waste materials for disposal.
- (g) Don and doff typical respirators, conduct simple visual checks and perform maintenance on the equipment (i.e. changing a filter or valve).
- (h) Describe, in basic terms, the limitations, advantages and disadvantages of various breathing equipment (half mask, full mask, powered and non-powered supplied air, and SCBA).
- (i) Discuss the major component parts of an air filtration system (HEPA unit), and the potential for damage of the HEPA filter.
- (j) Visually inspect the first and second filters of a two-stage HEPA pre-filtering system to determine if replacement is required, and replace them when necessary.
- (k) Discuss/practice typical work procedures on abatement projects (e.g. glove bag removal).

SCHEDULE B
Instructor Requirements

The instructor of an “Occupational Health and Safety for the Asbestos Worker” course should have the following:

- (a) Proof of completion of an “Occupational Health and Safety for the Asbestos Worker” course or equivalent course(s) from an approved training agency.
- (b) Documented experience of having taught the course a minimum of 2 times with an approved instructor.
- (c) Proof of successful completion of an instructional training program from a recognized agency(s) totaling at least 10 hours duration covering the following areas:
 - Principles of instruction
 - Aspects of motivation
 - Lesson planning
 - Lecture and demonstration techniques
 - Use of training aids
 - Methods of evaluating student performance

AND

- (d) Education and experience in the fields of health & safety and asbestos abatement.

NOTE:

- i) Equivalencies for items a), b) and c) will be considered.
- ii) The agency is expected to supplement this requirement with criteria for skills in actual abatement and removal techniques in various industrial applications.
- iii) Instructors must be approved by Alberta Employment and Immigration.
- iv) Instructor accreditation is attached only to that agency and is not transferable. The agency must “qualify” new instructors and submit a request to Alberta Employment and Immigration for their approval.

SCHEDULE C
Learning Materials

The following materials must be provided to the trainee:

I. Legislation:

- *Occupational Health and Safety Act*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation*
- Occupational Health and Safety Code

The above legislation is available from:

Alberta Queen's Printer
Main Floor, Park Plaza
10611 – 98 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2P7
Phone: (780) 427 – 4952
Fax: (780) 452 – 0668
Website: <http://www.qp.alberta.ca>

NOTE: There is a charge for printed copies of the legislation. The Occupational Health and Safety legislation is available for download on the Alberta Workplace Health & Safety Website at <http://www.worksafe.alberta.ca>.

II. Publications: (Suggested List)

- Asbestos Abatement Manual
- Asbestos at the Worksite
- What Your Doctor Needs To Know About Your Job

SCHEDULE D

Examples of Equipment and Facilities

I. Classroom Area (Mandatory)

- First aid equipment and certified personnel
- Fire extinguishers and evacuation procedures
- Adequate seating for individuals
- Appropriate toilet facilities
- Adequate instructional materials and demonstration equipment

II. Classroom or Shop Area

- Air monitoring/testing equipment
- Respirators (one per individual)
- Disposable clothing
- Rubber boots

III. Shop Area (or remote site)

- Enclosure with decontamination facility (exhaust unit, worker access, airlocks, etc.) including a transfer room and clean room
- Air movement and filtration system
- Vacuum system (HEPA)
- Hand tools, cleaning tools
- Poly sheeting, bags, labels, tape
- Warning signs
- Temporary lighting system
- Two-way radio system (optional)
- Carts, wagons, containers, etc.
- Surfactants, encapsulents
- Scaffolds, ladders
- Electric airless spray

NOTE: The course provider does not need to have all of the above equipment to be approved as a training agency. However, they must demonstrate that they have adequate equipment to properly deliver the course.

SCHEDULE E

Asbestos Worker Re-Certification Requirements

The asbestos worker re-certification program consists of the following:

- 1) Workers must take a re-certification exam, administered by an accredited agency, once every three (3) years.
- 2) The exam must be taken by the expiry date of the worker's most recent training card.
- 3) The worker must pass the exam with a minimum grade of 80%.
- 4) A worker who does not pass the exam must re-take the two-day course, "Occupational Health & Safety for the Asbestos Worker," offered by an accredited agency.
- 5) Exams will consist of 50 randomly selected questions from a pool of questions provided by Alberta Employment and Immigration. There must be at least 5 questions selected from each of the following categories:
 - Regulatory requirements applying to asbestos abatement
 - Health issues associated with asbestos
 - Work procedures related to asbestos abatement projects
 - Personal protective equipment
 - Other applicable health and safety issues, (e.g. heat stress)
- 6) It is recognized that individuals with certain professional designations are required to achieve a level of competence related to asbestos, well in excess of the minimum requirements set out in the two-day course. The requirement to re-certify will therefore apply to all individuals who hold valid asbestos worker cards, unless they are a member in good standing in at least one of the following organizations:
 - **American Board of Industrial Hygiene**, with one of the following designations:
 - Certified Industrial Hygienist, CIH
 - Certified Associate Industrial Hygienist, CAIH
 - Industrial Hygienist in Training, IHIT
 - **Canadian Registration Board of Occupational Hygienists**, with one of the following designations:
 - Registered Occupational Hygienist, ROH
 - Registered Occupational Hygiene Technologist, ROHT

- **Council on Certification of Health, Environmental and Safety Technologists**, with the following designation:
 - Certified Occupational Health and Safety Technologist, COHST

Course instructors that have been approved by Alberta Employment and Immigration for an accredited agency are also not required to take the re-certification exam, providing that they have taught the course at least once in the past three years.

Members of these organizations, and course instructors, may apply for a new card from the agency who issued their original card at any time regardless of the expiry date of their previous card. These individuals will need to provide proof (such as membership cards) indicating that they are a member in good standing prior to receiving their new asbestos worker card.

- 7) Cards issued after January 1, 2004 will have an expiry date of three years from the date of training and must be laminated with a photo (i.e. head and shoulders) of the worker to whom the card is issued.
- 8) After December 31, 2006, cards without an expiry date will no longer be valid.
- 9) When an agency issues the new card they must collect the old card and send the old cards back to Alberta Employment and Immigration.

SCHEDULE F

Exam Challenge Requirements

Workers who have taken asbestos training in another jurisdiction may challenge the final exam without taking the full two-day “Occupational Health & Safety for the Asbestos Worker” course.

To qualify, a worker must provide documentation to the training agency showing that they have:

- Completed asbestos training within the past three years (name of course, date, location).

OR

- Completed asbestos training more than three years ago, but have had ongoing experience in the asbestos abatement or consulting industries since that time.

NOTE: Workers who challenge the exam and do not receive a mark of 80% or better (pass) must complete the full two-day course to receive their card.

SCHEDULE G

Application Procedure to Become an Agency Approved to Provide the Asbestos Course

1. The agency making an initial application for accreditation of a course titled “Occupational Health and Safety for the Asbestos Worker” must forward the application to the Director of Occupational Hygiene, Alberta Employment and Immigration.
2. The application must include:
 - (a) Complete details of the topics to be covered.
 - (b) Breakdown of time allotment for topics (theory and practical).
 - (c) An example of the training materials developed by the agency which will be provided to students.
 - (d) Criteria for evaluating instructor skills in asbestos removal and abatement techniques.
 - (e) List and credentials of instructors.
 - (f) Description of the field or practical activities.
 - (g) Procedures for evaluating candidates who are seeking retroactive certificates for personnel previously trained by the agency, or equivalency certificates for personnel possessing certificates from other jurisdictions (Schedule “F”).
 - (h) Procedures for evaluating candidates who have difficulty with English or with literacy problems. The agency must keep records when alternate procedures (e.g. oral exams, translated exams) are used to evaluate candidates.
 - (i) Evidence of an administrative procedure to support on-going courses.
 - (j) Diagram, plans or photographs of the enclosure; or specifications, description or photographs of the field station.
 - (k) List of equipment, tools, etc. to be used.
3. Approval for the course, learning materials, field station and specified instructors will be provided in the form of a letter from a **Director of Occupational Hygiene**.
4. The application and learning materials will be held on file for information purposes.
5.
 - a) Any changes, deletions or additions to the application or learning materials must be provided to Alberta Employment and Immigration prior to incorporation.
 - b) Schedules for the course offerings; including time, place and instructors, must be provided to Alberta Employment and Immigration at least five (5) working days in advance of the course.
6. The agency must maintain a list of current students and previous graduates, complete with certificate dates and certificate numbers.

7. A laminated card bearing the title of the course, name of the student, the name of the instructor, the name of the agency, student identification number, card expiry date and a photograph of the student must be provided to the successful students.
8. Immediately following the completion of a training course, a list of successful students trained must be provided to the Director of Occupational Hygiene, Alberta Employment and Immigration. Cards will not be valid until they have been entered into the Alberta Employment and Immigration cardholder database.
9. The agency may provide retroactive or equivalency certificates if it is satisfied that the candidates have met the course content criteria. (This condition may be met with an upgrade seminar and/or “challenge” exam, statement of experience and an administrative fee).
10. Alberta Employment and Immigration reserves the right to inspect, monitor, audit and evaluate the instruction and administration of an agency’s course at any time without prior notification.
11. All cards issued after January 1, 2004 must have an expiry date (3 years from the date of issue) and include a photograph of the worker.
12. Asbestos worker cards will be provided to the agency from Alberta Employment and Immigration. These cards are numbered. Agencies must issue the cards in numerical sequence. The number of any blank cards that are destroyed or lost must be provided to Alberta Employment and Immigration immediately following that occurrence.
13. Approval to run the course will be ongoing provided the conditions are unchanged. Alberta Employment and Immigration reserves the right to revoke approved agency status for those agencies that do not comply with the course guidelines or who have not provided a training course within a three (3) year period.

SCHEDULE H

Issuance of Replacement Cards

Where a worker loses their original asbestos card, they must contact their original training agency to have a new card issued. The agency is responsible to ensure that they are issuing a new card to a worker who has successfully completed the asbestos worker course, challenged the exam or re-certified within the past three years.

Process

1. Check photo ID (e.g. driver's license) of worker and ensure worker has successfully completed the course or re-certified within the past three years.
2. Have worker read and sign "Record of Asbestos Worker Training Card Replacement" form (see next page).
3. Have worker sign the back of the new card and affix photograph to card.
4. Card issuer to sign card and indicate expiry date (3 years from date of original card issue).
5. Laminate card.
6. Return completed form and record of old and new card numbers to Alberta Employment and Immigration immediately following new card issue.

Record of Asbestos Worker Training Card Replacement

Reason for Card Replacement:

- Damaged (original card must be returned)
- Lost (if found, must be returned to Workplace Policy and Legislation)
- i) I hereby confirm that I understand that I am not permitted to lend my training card to another worker or to use another worker's card.
- ii) In the case where I find my lost card (that has been replaced), I will promptly return it to Alberta Employment and Immigration, Workplace Policy and Legislation, 8th Floor Labour Building, 10808-99 Avenue, Edmonton, AB, T5K 0G5.
- iii) When performing asbestos work, I will have this card available for display to an Occupational Health and Safety Officer if requested.

Worker Name:	Signature:	Date:
Photo ID (type):		
Card Issuer Name:	Signature:	Date: