

WHY?

SUMMARY OF OSHA ASBESTOS STANDARD EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 1976

Under the current standard, it is the employer's responsibility to assure that exposure of employees does not exceed the following permissible exposure levels.

- a. Eight-hour time-weighted average: Two fibers, longer than five micrometers, per cubic centimeter.
- b. Ceiling (Peak) concentrations: Ten fibers, longer than five micrometers, per cubic centimeter.

Engineering controls such as isolation, enclosure, exhaust ventilation and dust collection are the preferred methods for meeting the prescribed exposure limits. All external surfaces must be maintained free of asbestos fiber accumulation.

Respiratory protection is required whenever airborne fiber concentrations exceed either the permissible time weighted average level or the permissible ceiling concentration. Protective clothing is required whenever airborne fiber concentrations exceed the permissible ceiling level. Caution signs, change rooms and employee notification are required where asbestos fiber concentrations exceed permissible exposure limits. The standard requires that all workplaces where asbestos fibers may be released shall be monitored to determine exposure levels, and regular monitoring is required where exposure levels are expected to exceed permissible limits. Employers must maintain records of monitoring required by the standard. They must also provide or make available medical examinations for employees exposed to airborne concentrations of asbestos fibers.