



A Comprehensive Guide to Asbestos Exposure

Helpful information to help
you better understand
asbestos and its effects.

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What is Asbestos?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral classified as a known human carcinogen. Asbestos is commonly understood to cause mesothelioma, but it can also result in lung cancer, asbestosis, and other cancers. Most people are not diagnosed with an asbestos-related disease until decades after the exposure.

Asbestos Exposure on the Job

Asbestos was once referred to as the “miracle mineral” for its resistance to fire, heat, water, chemicals, and electricity. As a result, it was widely used across a variety of industries, including:

- Construction
- Automotive
- Maritime
- Electrical
- Mechanical
- Plumbing & Pipefitting
- Boilermaking
- HVAC
- Steel & Iron Production
- Carpentry
- Welding
- Painting
- Engineering
- Aviation
- Manufacturing
- Chemical Processing
- Oil & Gas Refining
- and More

Workers across industries were exposed firsthand at work, and asbestos fibers could also attach to their clothing and person, exposing their spouses and families at home.

Chicago Trade Unions & Asbestos Exposure

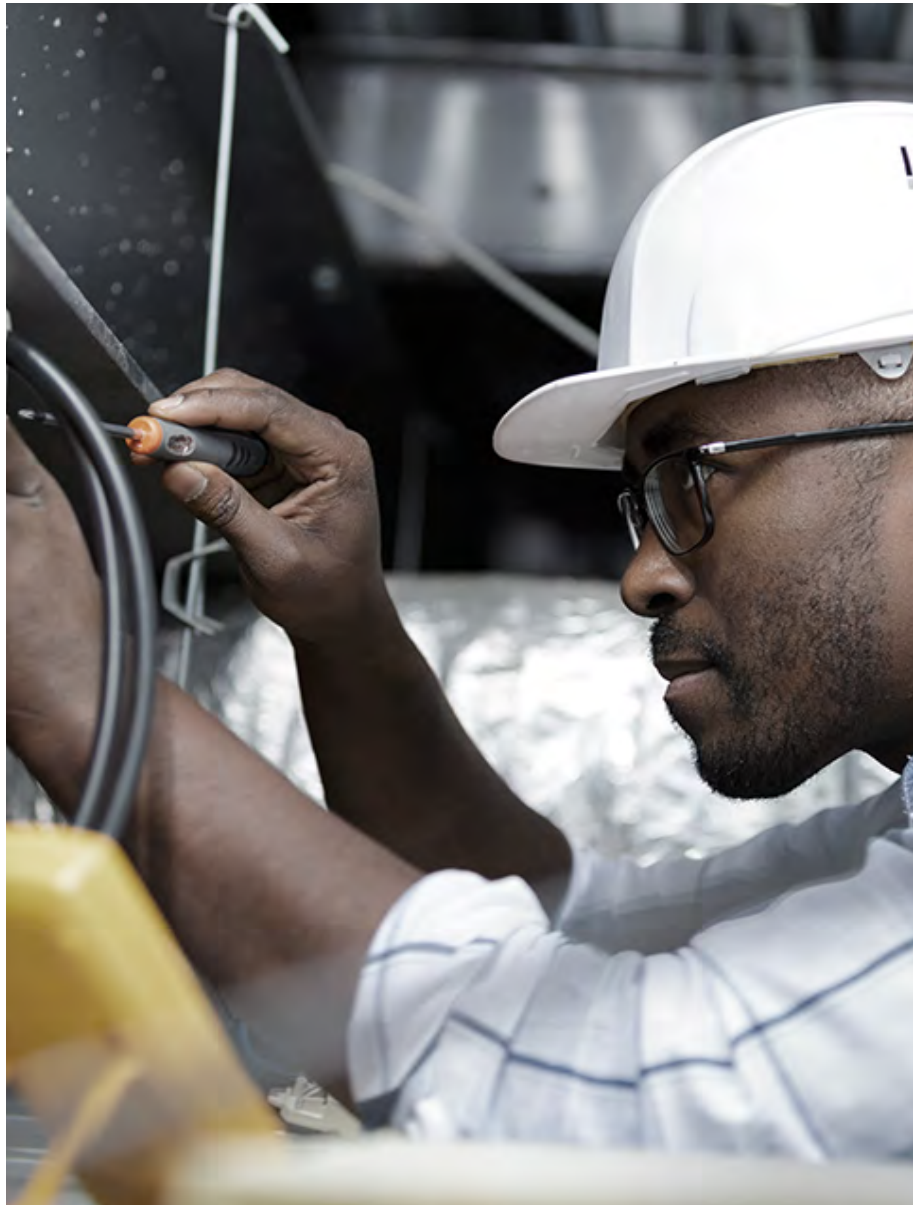
Cooney and Conway has a strong affiliation with the construction trade unions and the work we do representing their members.

The trades with some of the highest degrees of asbestos exposure between the 1950s and early 1980s include:

- Insulators (aka asbestos workers or heat and frost workers)
- Chicago Local 17
- Pipefitters - Chicago Local 597
- Plumbers - Chicago Local 130
- Sheet Metal Workers - Chicago Local 73
- Boilermakers - Chicago Local 1
- Steelworkers - Locals 1010, 1011, 1014, 1066 (all in/around Northwest Indiana)
- Iron Workers - Chicago Local 1

We also represent those who have worked as electricians, carpenters, drywallers, plasterers, lathers, tile setters, shipyard workers, millwrights, and many more.

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Asbestos Exposure in the Military

Veterans make up nearly a third of all mesothelioma diagnoses, and because symptoms can appear up to 50 years post-exposure, more are going to continue to develop mesothelioma. Beginning in the 1930s and through the 1980s, those in the military may have been exposed to asbestos, as every branch used some sort of asbestos product at that time.

Those clients who served in the Navy were subjected to substantial exposure to asbestos while working below deck in the engineering spaces such as boiler and engine rooms. Those both onboard and in shipyards are at risk of developing mesothelioma or other asbestos-related illnesses.

Asbestos Exposure in Other Occupations

The list above shows just how many workers have been exposed to asbestos while on the job, and that list isn't even exhaustive. Because of the prevalence of asbestos in so many products, millions of people were exposed in the 20th century.

Regulations around asbestos didn't start until the 1970s, and it wasn't until decades later that the most aggressive regulations were enacted. And although regulations today are meant to protect workers, asbestos still exists, and asbestos exposure can still occur.

It can take years for mesothelioma symptoms to develop. Those who may have encountered asbestos at work decades ago are still at risk of getting mesothelioma today. In particular, trades that deal with buildings or ships—structures that can still have asbestos—which includes construction workers, shipyard workers, or factory workers, in addition to miners and steel mill workers, are at a higher risk of exposure even now.



Possible Asbestos Exposure Sites in Chicago

Although asbestos is now regulated in the United States, it wasn't always, and it still isn't banned. For decades, millions of workers in occupational situations were inhaling asbestos fibers day after day, year after year, which had the potential to kill them with no idea of the dangers. Those working with insulation and piping materials were most at risk, but its use was pervasive, and its dangers eventually became apparent. Take a look at the top five industries at risk of asbestos exposure.

There are many different types of job sites that have been identified as possibly containing or having contained asbestos in the Chicago area. If you've been to any of these types of job sites and have any symptoms related to mesothelioma or asbestos exposure, we recommend you see a doctor right away. We'll be here when you need legal representation from an asbestos lawyer to get the justice you deserve.

Chicago area sites with possible or reported asbestos over the years include:

- Chicago Public Schools
- Oil Refineries
- Power Generation Plants
- Johns Manville Plant
- Steel Mills
- Factories
- Foundries
- Water Treatment Plants
- Shipyards
- Auto Mechanic Garages

Please note that this list isn't comprehensive and doesn't necessarily reflect the current conditions of these sites.

Asbestos in Products

Building materials were historically some of the most common asbestos-containing items and may still be present today. However, there are a number of alternatives that replace asbestos now.

Asbestos was used in:

- Adhesives
- Electrical Components
- Drywall and Roofing Materials
- Fireproofing Materials Including Textiles
- Vinyl Products
- Millboard

Consumer products often contained asbestos. Talcum powder is one of the best-known products, but the reach of asbestos is much farther than that. Consumer products that may have contained asbestos include:

- Appliances
- Hair Dryers
- Makeup
- Kitchen Textiles
- Fake Snow
- Car Parts
- Fertilizer

Again, this list is not exhaustive, but it does give some indication of just how prevalent the substance once was. Asbestos' durability, low cost, and fire-resistant qualities (among others) made it a popular material for a number of uses. Today, asbestos can be found in older products that are still in use and, more recently, in talcum powder and some makeup products.



Products Known to Contain Asbestos

Cooney and Conway has experience in litigation regarding asbestos-contaminated talc, particularly body powders and makeup (specifically loose face powder). There are many examples of products in this category that have been shown to contain asbestos fiber. In 1976, the New York Times found ten of the nineteen products tested contained up to 20 percent asbestos. Products in their investigation included ZBT Baby Powder with Baby Oil, Cashmere Bouquet Body Talc, Coty Airspun Face Powder, and Rosemary Talc. These examples actually tested the highest, with ZBT Baby Powder containing the most out of all the products tested.

The products in the New York Times investigation aren't the only ones consumers have to worry about. The following are just some of the manufacturers and brands that have had their vintage products recently test positive for asbestos contamination:

- Avon Unforgettable Perfumed Talc
- Avon Timeless Powder
- Cashmere Bouquet
- Chanel Cocco Mademoiselle
- Coty Air Spun
- Coty Emeraude Dusting Powder
- Desert Flower Powder
- Estée Lauder Youth Dew Dusting Powder
- Friendship Garden Dusting Powder
- Johnson & Johnson Baby Powder
- Johnson & Johnson Shower to Shower Body Powder
- Shulton Old Spice

If you or a loved one has been exposed to asbestos, there is a risk that you could develop an asbestos-related disease. Use our exposure checklist to determine your level of risk.

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Impact of Asbestos Exposure

Any exposure to asbestos can lead to mesothelioma and other debilitating or deadly diseases. Those who have possibly been exposed to asbestos can undergo regular medical monitoring and screening. While there is no cure for mesothelioma, the medical and scientific communities have made great strides in treatment options to reduce painful symptoms and help improve longevity and quality of care for patients living with the deadly disease.

Individuals and families who have been victims of exposure to asbestos may be entitled to compensation. Since the early 1970s, the Chicago law firm of Cooney & Conway has been a respected national law firm in the practice of asbestos and mesothelioma litigation.

If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with an asbestos-related disease and would like to learn more about your legal rights, our highly experienced attorneys can be reached by calling 800-322-5573 for a free consultation.





Our History with Asbestos Litigation

For decades, we have built strong cases to pursue damages on behalf of our clients who have received diagnoses and treatment for asbestos-related cancers. Typically, this has included compensation for any expenses or losses incurred from exposure to asbestos, including diagnosis, treatments, lost wages, and any related costs. The cost of getting the proper treatment for mesothelioma or lung cancer is often quite expensive, and the attorneys at Cooney & Conway work hard to deliver the highest financial reward to our clients.

Clients have also been able to receive compensation for pain and suffering damages. It's hard to put a price on pain, but we work hard to get our clients the compensation they deserve for what they and their families have endured. Juries routinely return high awards for pain and suffering damages in mesothelioma cases.

If your loved one has passed away as a result of his or her asbestos-related injury, you may also be entitled to pursue wrongful death damages against asbestos product manufacturers. Mesothelioma and asbestos lung cancer are often deadly, and family members are given the right to pursue compensation for wrongful death.

5 Steps to a Mesothelioma Lawsuit

1

Preparation & Research

Identify which companies were responsible for exposing you or your loved one to asbestos and gather all information pertaining to the case with the help of lawyers.

2

Filing

Determine which state the lawsuit needs to be filed in, what type of claim it should be, and which defendants should be named in the lawsuit.

3

Response

The defendants will get a copy of the written complaint, hire their own lawyers, and have approximately 30 days to respond.

4

Discovery

All parties involved find out all the necessary information before the case goes to trial and/or is settled. The discovery process includes depositions, written interrogatories, affidavits, etc.

5

Settlement

If the case is not able to settle prior to trial, the case will be presented to a jury, who will decide whether the defendant is responsible for the client's injuries and what the fair compensation for the client is.



Interested In talking to someone in our office?

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