

Student Handout

Asbestos

Asbestos is a strong, fire-resistant mineral fibre. In the past, asbestos was used as insulation against heat or noise and for fire protection. It was also added to materials such as cement and plaster to give them more structural strength.

Asbestos is a hazardous material. Renovation of houses containing asbestos products can release asbestos fibres, which are extremely fine and can stay in the air for hours. Unprotected workers exposed to asbestos-contaminated air can breathe in the fibres. This may cause serious health problems, including lung disease and cancer.

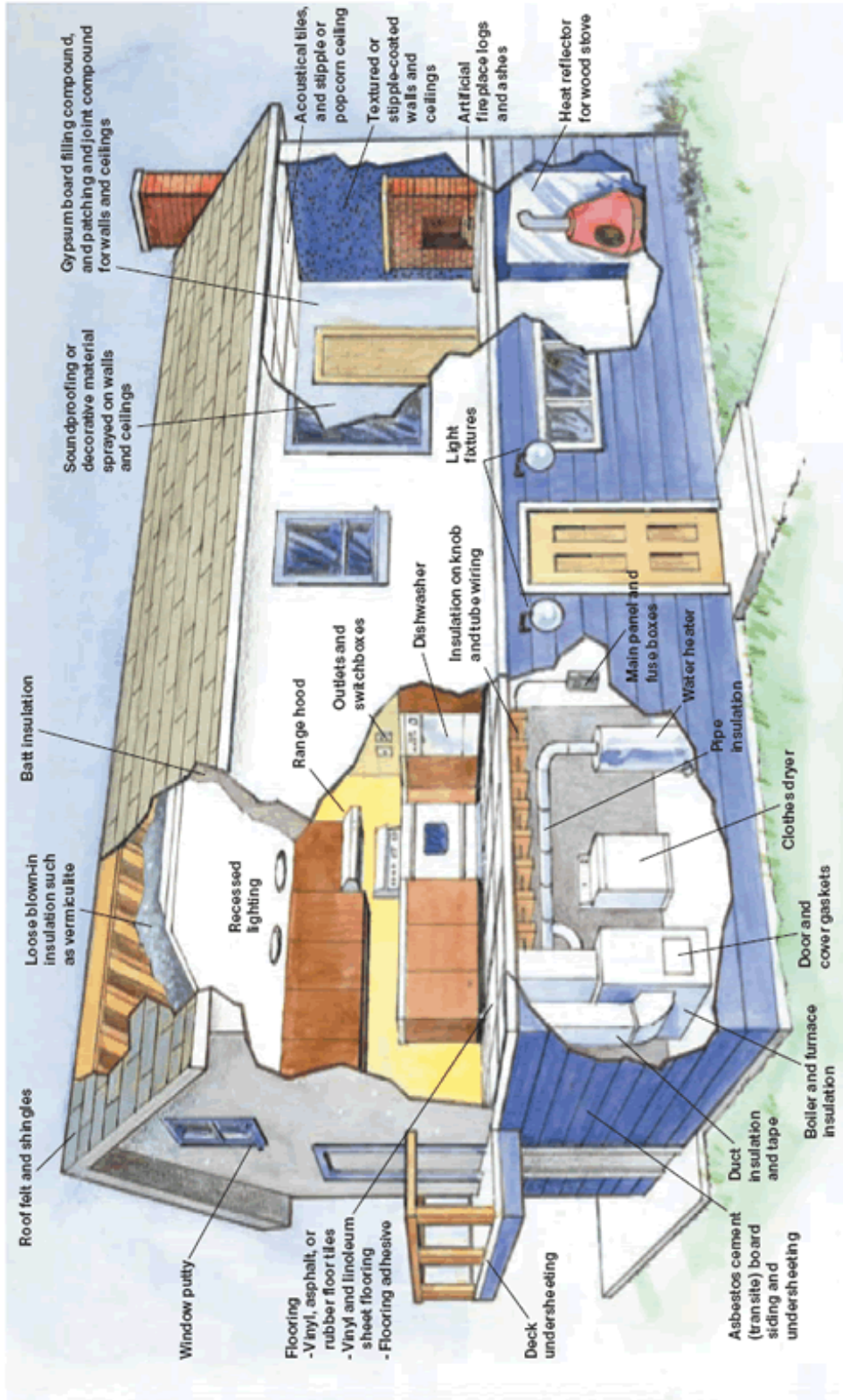
Safety tips

- Review the diagram on page 2 to learn about common sites for asbestos in older buildings.
- If you are asked to work on a building that is being renovated, check that it has been inspected by a qualified person and declared free of asbestos.
- If you encounter asbestos-containing materials while working, which were not identified during the inspection, **stop work immediately!** Have trained and qualified workers remove these materials before resuming work. Asbestos survey and removal companies can be found in the Yellow Pages under Asbestos Abatement & Removal, Health & Safety Consultants, or Environmental Consultants.



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Potential Sources of Asbestos



WORKING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

WCB Prevention Information Line: 604.276-3100 or toll-free 1.888.621-SAFE (7.233) • www.WorkSafebc.com