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Asbestos

Asbestos became increasingly popular among manufacturers and builders in the late 19th century because of its sound absorption, average tensile strength, and its resistance to heat, electrical and chemical damage. When asbestos is used for its resistance to fire or heat, the fibers are often mixed with cement or woven into fabric or mats. Asbestos was used in some products for its heat resistance, and in the past was used on electric oven and hotplate wiring for its electrical insulation at elevated temperature, and in buildings for its flame-retardant and insulating properties, tensile strength, flexibility, and resistance to chemicals.

Black Mold

Exposure to the mycotoxins present in *Stachybotrys chartarum* or *Stachybotrys atra* can have a wide range of effects. Depending on the length of exposure and volume of spores inhaled or ingested, symptoms can manifest as chronic fatigue or headaches, fever, irritation to the eyes, mucous membranes of the mouth, nose and throat, sneezing, rashes, and chronic coughing. In severe cases of exposure or cases exacerbated by allergic reaction, symptoms can be extreme including nausea, vomiting, and bleeding in the lungs and nose.

Biological Hazards

Also known as biohazards, refer to biological substances that pose a threat to the health of living organisms, primarily that of humans. This can include medical waste or samples of a microorganism, virus or toxin (from a biological source) that can impact human health. It can also include substances harmful to animals. The term and its associated symbol is generally used as a warning, so that those potentially exposed to the substances will know to take precautions.

Carcinogens

Is any substance, radionuclide or radiation, that is an agent directly involved in causing cancer. This may be due to the ability to damage the genome or to the disruption of cellular metabolic processes. Several radioactive substances are considered carcinogens, but their carcinogenic activity is attributed to the radiation, for example gamma rays and alpha particles, which they emit. Common examples of carcinogens are inhaled asbestos, certain dioxins, and tobacco smoke.

Lead Based Paint

Although lead improves paint performance, it is a dangerous substance. It is especially damaging to children under age six whose bodies are still developing. Lead causes nervous system damage, stunted growth, and delayed development. It can cause kidney damage and affects every organ system of the body. It also is dangerous to adults, and can cause reproductive problems for both men and women. Lead paint is particularly dangerous because it tastes sweet therefore encouraging children to put lead chips and toys with lead dust in their mouths

Medical Waste

Is also known as clinical waste, normally refers to waste products that cannot be considered general waste, produced from healthcare premises, such as hospitals, clinics, doctors offices, labs and nursing homes.

Mesothelioma

Is a rare form of cancer that develops from the protective lining that covers many of the body's internal organs, the mesothelium. It is usually caused by exposure to asbestos. Most people who develop mesothelioma have worked on jobs where they inhaled asbestos particles, or they have been exposed to asbestos dust and fiber in other ways. It has also been suggested that washing the clothes of a family member who worked with asbestos can put a person at risk for developing mesothelioma.

Sick Building Syndrome (SBS)

Is a combination of ailments (a syndrome) associated with an individual's place of work (office building) or residence. Most of the sick building syndrome is related to poor indoor air quality. The causes are frequently pinned down to flaws in the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems. Other causes have been attributed to contaminants produced by outgassing of some types of building materials, volatile organic compounds (VOC), molds, improper exhaust ventilation of ozone (byproduct of some office machinery), light industrial chemicals used within, or lack of adequate fresh-air intake/air filtration.

Toxic Waste

Is material that can cause death or injury to living creatures. It spreads quite easily and can contaminate lakes and rivers. The term is often used interchangeably with "hazardous waste", or discarded material that can pose a long-term risk to health or environment. Toxic wastes often contain carcinogens, and exposure to these by some route, such as leakage or evaporation from the storage, causes cancer to appear at increased frequency in exposed individuals.