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When you mention the word “asbestos,” many people think of a time when we worried about the dangerous material, before it was strictly regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency and Consumer Product Safety Commission. These people, however, may be alarmed to know that asbestos can still be found in nearly 80% of structures built prior to 1980. Indeed, asbestos is still a problem, not only in Cincinnati, but across Ohio and the United States as well.

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral, not unlike vermiculite in its consistency. Asbestos was used for hundreds of years in the United States, but the peak of its use was when it began to be included in almost all industrial products. Asbestos possessed qualities which made it extremely resistant to flame, heat, and temperature transfer, making it ideal for any product which required insulation capabilities. Asbestos fibers were also very small and flexible, so it could be used or mixed with any industrial compounds.

Where asbestos might be found in the home or other building?

Again, asbestos was used primarily for insulation capacities, so any product that required insulation likely used asbestos at least to some degree. The most common [asbestos products](#) in homes and other buildings today are older insulation materials. These can include the rolled insulation many of us are familiar with, as well as spray or “popcorn” insulation products. Other common products involve linings which surround heating, ventilation, or air conditioning units, which naturally require some degree of insulation capability.

Which asbestos products are dangerous?

The most important thing to remember when analyzing asbestos use in the home is to realize that not all asbestos products present an immediate danger. It is only when they are broken, cracked, or otherwise compromised that they present a hazard. In these conditions, asbestos fibers can be released into the surrounding air supply and be inhaled. Asbestos products which are stable, intact, and undamaged are likely not a problem, though the best way to tell is through an asbestos consulting or abatement company.

Asbestos, in most products, was banned in the late 1970’s because it was found to be responsible for a number of respiratory conditions in those exposed to the fibers. Among the more serious conditions caused by asbestos exposure is the rare and aggressive cancer [mesothelioma](#), which was common in those who worked with asbestos in industrial settings.

Asbestos exposure can easily be avoided if the home or property owner knows how to handle the situation. Safe and healthy homes for you and your family can easily be attained by knowing how to handle problems yourself and utilizing professional services when necessary