



## Technical Bulletin

### Topic: Vermiculite

Subject:

#### Policy on vermiculite insulation

**Purpose:** To ensure that all field staff and contractors understand the policy on vermiculite insulation.

**Background:** The issue of how to treat buildings containing vermiculite insulation as discussed within the standing Technical Committee in July 2007. This technical bulletin presents the resolution of those discussions, and describes what field crews should do when they find vermiculite in a house.

**Policy:** Vermiculite insulation has been associated with asbestos and while not all vermiculite is contaminated with asbestos, there is no way to determine if a particular installation does or does not contain it. Our policy, therefore, is to treat all vermiculite as if it is asbestos-containing and do not disturb it either directly (e.g. – by moving it or walking through it) or indirectly (e.g. – by pressurizing the house or ducts.) Specifically, field crews should take the following steps when they visit a house:

1. Investigate for presence of vermiculite insulation before conducting any pressure testing.
2. Notify building owner of the presence of vermiculite if it is found.
3. Decline to perform any treatments in the building that would disturb the vermiculite. (e.g. – blower door testing, duct blaster testing (if air handler or ducts are located in the attic,) attic air sealing, attic insulation. Other treatments (e.g. – lighting replacements, other air sealing) may be performed.
4. Tell building owner that if they remove the vermiculite (using qualified and properly licensed abatement contractor, have an air quality test completed by a certified contractor and provide the documented air quality test results) then the field crew can return to perform full service.

These same procedures should apply to subcontractors doing work for CSG, and to contractors within programs that CSG administers. CSG staff, contractors and subcontractors should not describe vermiculite as a contaminant since we cannot determine if a given installation contains asbestos or not.

Per a guidance letter released on July 9, 2013 by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), if material is attic fill, block fill or other loose bulk vermiculite material, it must be designated and treated as an asbestos-containing material (ACM). No approved analytical method currently exists to reliably confirm such vermiculite material as non-ACM.

To view the entire document, please visit the following link:

<http://www.labor.state.ny.us/workerprotection/safetyhealth/PDFs/Asbestos/Vermiculite%20Interim%20Guidance%207.9.13.pdf>

Resources:

EPA's website: <http://www.epa.gov/asbestos/>

Current Best Practices for Vermiculite Attic Insulation Brochure:

<http://www.epa.gov/retailindustry/buildings/insulationbrochure2-1.pdf>



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