



News Release

SCRD Introduces New Testing and Disposal Requirements for Materials that Contain Asbestos

Sechelt, BC—August 29, 2016— Effective September 19, the Sunshine Coast Regional District (SCRD) is introducing new requirements for testing and disposing of materials containing asbestos.

Asbestos is a strong, fire-resistant mineral fibre. It was used in a wide variety of materials as insulation against heat or noise, for fire protection, and to increase structural strength in materials such as cement and plaster. Its use in Canada was phased out by the early 1990's.

"Before someone begins a renovation or demolition project, they should contact a qualified company that deals with asbestos to help determine what materials require testing and to conduct the testing" says Robyn Cooper, Manager, Solid Waste Services.

Asbestos is not a health risk if left intact, but if disturbed, asbestos fibres are released into the air, are easily inhaled, and stay airborne for hours or even days. Repeated exposure can lead to lung cancer and other lethal asbestos-related diseases.

Materials testing positive for asbestos may be disposed of at the Sechelt Landfill only, and must follow strict bagging, sealing and labelling procedures. Delivery must be scheduled because of specialized burial requirements and loads must have a copy of the certified asbestos test results. There are separate procedures for drywall with asbestos.

"For personal safety, we recommend that people contact a qualified company for removal, says Cooper. "They are trained on proper procedures, equipment, containment and abatement, and can do air quality testing to ensure that no asbestos fibres are left floating in the air afterward."

Materials that have tested negative for asbestos can be delivered to the Sechelt Landfill or Pender Harbour Transfer Station accompanied by negative results within six months of the test and they will be handled and charged as regular waste from renovation/demolition.

On September 7 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., the SCRD will be hosting an information session at Raven's Cry Theatre in Sechelt on minimizing asbestos exposure and the new testing and disposal requirements. The session will be followed by a question and answer session and a film screening of "Breathtaking", a documentary by Vancouver filmmaker, Kathleen Mullen which helps raise awareness of the health risks of asbestos exposure.

For more information, go to www.scrd.ca/asbestos--drywall.

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Media contact:

Robyn Cooper, Manager, Solid Waste Services
Sunshine Coast Regional District
Tel.: 604-885-6800
Email: robyn.cooper@scrd.ca