

Removal of vermiculite insulation



In some instances, safely removing vermiculite insulation from an attic or building requires additional care and precautions due to the potential of it containing asbestos.

What Is Vermiculite?

With the upsurge in home ownership during the baby boom, vermiculite insulation was a popular material in the 1950's, and continued with the energy crisis into the late 1970's. In Canada, it was one of the insulating materials allowed under the Canadian Home Insulation Program from about 1976 to the mid-1980's.

Vermiculite is a naturally-occurring mineral that when heated to a high temperature, expands to as much as 8 to 30 times its original size. Expanded forms of vermiculite are light-weight, fire-resistant and odorless, making it an ideal material used for attic and wall insulation inside houses and buildings. Vermiculite appears in the form of pebbly or porous shiny flakes.

Why Is Vermiculite Hazardous?

Vermiculite itself has not been shown to be a health problem. However, some vermiculite insulation contained asbestos fibres, which can cause problems if inhaled.

Of concern is Zonolite® Attic Insulation; this insulation was sold in Canada under the name of Zonolite® and was extracted from the Libby Mine in Montana, USA. This mine had a natural deposit of asbestos which resulted in the vermiculite being contaminated with asbestos.

Vermiculite produced by the Libby Mine has not been on the market in Canada for more than 10 years. Not all vermiculite sold in Canada before 1990 contains asbestos fibres. However, if you are dealing with vermiculite insulation, it is reasonable to assume that it may be contaminated with asbestos.



Vermiculite Removal Solutions for Contractors

If you are a contractor who specializes in removing vermiculite from buildings and attics, it is important to inform yourself about the hazards of vermiculite and asbestos. Understanding proper equipment and personal protection to safely remove these dangerous substances, you will not only make a cost-effective decision to remedy the issue, but keep yourself and those around you safe as well. The regulations for the removal of asbestos containing material vary by province. Training is available in your area.



PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- 1 - 18HP Insulation Removal Vacuum
- 6 - 6" x 25' Vaculite Hose
- 5 - 6" Metal Hose Connectors
- 1 - 6" to 4" Metal Reducer
- 1 - 4" x 25' Hose
- 13 - Adjustable Hose Clamps
- 1 - 4" x 4' Metal Pick-up Tube
- 5 - Disposable Collection Bags

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The most important piece of equipment required to perform this work is a specialized industrial vacuum system built for the removal of hazardous vermiculite. Such industrial vacuums should include the following features:

- Provides a safe vacuum environment without construction materials such as nails and staples from getting in your way during the removal process.
- Can safely contain dangerous contaminants without letting the operator come into any contact with them during the removal of vermiculite.
- Has the ability to return only clean air while containing and filtering harmful materials through a pre-separation system and drum container

By keeping these elements in mind while purchasing a vacuum for insulation removal, you'll increase the chance that you'll get an efficient and cost-effective vacuum that will serve you well for a long time.

[For more information contact your local Safety Express](#)