

General industry employees may be exposed to asbestos during the manufacture of asbestos-containing products or when performing brake and clutch repairs. In the construction industry, exposure occurs when workers disturb asbestos-containing materials during the renovation or demolition of buildings. Employees in the maritime environment also may be exposed when renovating or demolishing ships constructed with asbestos-containing materials. In addition, custodial workers may be exposed through contact with deteriorating asbestos-containing materials in buildings.

Yes. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has the following three standards to protect workers from exposure to asbestos in the workplace:

29 *CFR* 1926.1101 covers construction work, including alteration, repair, renovation, and demolition of structures containing asbestos.

29 *CFR* 1915.1001 covers asbestos exposure during work in shipyards.

29 *CFR* 1910.1001 applies to asbestos exposure in general industry, such as exposure during brake and clutch repair, custodial work, and manufacture of asbestos-containing products.

The standards for the construction and shipyard industries classify the hazards of asbestos work activities and prescribe particular requirements for each classification:

Class I is the most potentially hazardous class of asbestos jobs and involves the removal of thermal system insulation and sprayed-on or troweled-on surfacing asbestos-containing materials or presumed asbestos-containing materials.

Class II includes the removal of other types of asbestos-containing materials that are not thermal system insulation, such as resilient flooring and roofing materials containing asbestos.

Class III focuses on repair and maintenance operations where asbestos-containing or presumed asbestos-containing materials are disturbed.

Class IV pertains to custodial activities where employees clean up asbestos-containing waste and debris.

There are equivalent regulations in states with OSHA-approved state plans.

Employee exposure to asbestos must not exceed 0.1 fiber per cubic centimeter (f/cc) of air, averaged over an 8-hour work shift. Short-term exposure must also be limited to not more than 1 f/cc, averaged over 30 minutes. Rotation of employees to achieve compliance with either permissible exposure limit (PEL) is prohibited.

In construction and shipyard work, unless you are able to demonstrate that employee exposures will be below the PELs (a “negative exposure assessment”), you are generally required to conduct daily monitoring for workers in Class I and II regulated areas. For workers in other operations where exposures are expected to exceed one of the PELs, you must conduct periodic monitoring. In general industry, you must perform initial monitoring for workers who may be exposed above a PEL or above the excursion limit. You must conduct subsequent monitoring at reasonable intervals, and in no case at intervals greater than 6 months for employees exposed above a PEL.

You must create controlled zones known as regulated areas that are designed to protect employees where certain work with asbestos is performed. You must limit access to regulated areas to authorized persons who are wearing appropriate respiratory protection. You must also prohibit eating, smoking, drinking, chewing tobacco or gum, and applying cosmetics in these areas. You must display warning signs at each regulated area. In construction and shipyards, workers must perform Class I, II, and III asbestos work (and all other

operations where asbestos concentrations may exceed a PEL) within regulated areas. In general industry, you must establish regulated areas wherever asbestos concentrations may exceed a PEL.

You must control exposures to or below the PELs using engineering controls and work practices to the extent feasible. Where feasible engineering controls and work practices do not ensure worker protection at the exposure limits, you must reduce employee exposures to the lowest levels achievable and then supplement them with respiratory protection to meet the PELs. In construction and shipyards, each work classification has specifics to or below the PELs. In general industry, each work classification has specific PELs.