

# NTPC Health & Safety Alert

## Asbestos Insulation



### Background

A recent inspection of an NTPC storage building revealed the release of asbestos contaminated vermiculite insulation from the ceiling of the building. Water damage to the ceiling and building settling had caused the ceiling panels to warp and shift, releasing the contaminated insulation.

### Practical Guidance

Vermiculite is a natural occurring mineral that is mined for its use in potting soil, building materials, and other commercial products. Since 1990, all vermiculite is tested for asbestos contamination and at this time suppliers only use non-asbestos-contaminated vermiculite for sale in North America.

Previous to 1990, 70% of vermiculite was sourced from one mine in Libby, Montana, which contained asbestos contaminated vermiculite. A popular use for the fire-proof, insulating material was as fill in attics, walls, and ceilings in homes built before 1990.

If the insulation is not disturbed, it is not harmful, but when the insulation is disturbed it can release harmful asbestos fibers into the air, which can be inhaled and lead to health risks.



For more information see:

<https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/diseases/vermiculite.html>