

How can I obtain a copy of the Asbestos Map of Western El Dorado County?

You'll find it and related information on the Internet at <http://www.consrv.ca.gov/>. Download the map, report, and related information for free, or purchase a paper print from the Department of Conservation's Division of Mines and Geology (current price \$75.00). See below for address and phone number.

For More Information

In the California Resources Agency:

- **Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology**, 801 K Street, Room 1400, Sacramento, CA 95814; (916) 445-5716. <http://www.consrv.ca.gov/>. Geology, mineral resources, landslides, earthquakes and related hazards in California.

In California Environmental Protection Agency:

- **Air Resources Board**, 2020 L Street, Sacramento, CA 95814; (916) 322-2990. <http://www.arb.ca.gov/>. Air quality, airborne toxics and related information.
- **Office of Environmental Health Assessment**, 301 Capitol Mall, Room 205, Sacramento, California 95814; (916) 324-7572; <http://www.oehha.ca.gov/>. Health effects and information regarding toxic substances.
- **Department of Toxic Substances Control**, P.O. Box 806, Sacramento, CA 95812-0806; (916) 255-3650; <http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/>. Naturally occurring asbestos issues and mitigation.

El Dorado County Environmental Management Department, 2850 Fairlane Ct., Building C, Placerville, CA 95667. (530) 621-5300; <http://www.co.el-dorado.ca.us/emd/>. Asbestos dust hazard management, local dust mitigation guidelines, regulations and procedures.

Cover: Sepentinite capped with asbestos vein (enlarged approx. 4X). *Photo by Max Flanery, California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology.*

California Department of Conservation
801 K St., MS 14-33
Sacramento, CA 95814

Asbestos Map of Western El Dorado County



CALIFORNIA RESOURCES AGENCY



- Department of Conservation



and



CALIFORNIA
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

- Air Resources Board
- Office of Environmental Health Assessment
- Department of Toxic Substances Control

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What is asbestos and where do you find it?

Asbestos is a term used for several naturally occurring fibrous minerals. The most common asbestos mineral in California is chrysotile, which is often contained in serpentinite (rock made of various serpentine minerals). While most serpentine rocks contain asbestos, not all do. Limited data and local variations (e.g., how much water was contained in the rock when the minerals in it were transformed—metamorphosed—into serpentine minerals) make it impossible to predict how much asbestos is present in the rock and soil at specific locations.

Serpentine is abundant in the Sierra Nevada foothills, Klamath Mountains, and Coast Ranges. It typically is grayish-green to bluish-black, may have a shiny appearance, and is soft enough to scratch with a nail or knife.

Why was this map prepared?

In March 1999, a task force comprised of local, state and federal agencies recommended that DMG develop a series of maps showing areas where naturally occurring asbestos is most likely to be found in various parts of California. Because of growing local asbestos-related health concerns, Western El Dorado County was selected as a “pilot project.” This pilot had three goals:

- Develop an improved map showing where asbestos is likely to be found using the best available information given limited time and money.
- Educate local citizens and governmental agencies about asbestos occurrence and appropriate use of the map and report.
- Identify the mapping methods and various products (e.g., maps, reports, guidelines, brochures) that can be developed with existing data to, when used appropriately, assist in minimizing asbestos exposure.

How is asbestos a health risk?

Asbestos is classified as a known human carcinogen by state, federal, and international health agencies. There are three major diseases associated with asbestos: asbestosis—a non-cancerous lung disease related to diffuse fibrous scarring of the lungs; lung cancer; and mesothelioma—a rare cancer of the thin membranes lining the lungs, chest, and abdominal cavity. These diseases may occur when someone inhales air that contains asbestos fibers. Thus, as long as asbestos fibers remain within the rock or soil, they do not normally cause health problems. There is no agreed-upon “safe” level of asbestos exposure. Any exposure involves some risk; the longer that someone is exposed and the more asbestos that is in the air, the greater the risk.

If asbestos is part of a rock, how does it get in the air?

Asbestos fibers are freed from rock when it is crushed or broken and through natural weathering processes. Once free, fibers may remain in the soil for a long time. After that, fibers can be lifted into the air by cars, construction equipment, lawnmowers, or anything else that disturbs the rock, soil, or dust. Natural wind currents can pick them up and carry them aloft. Airborne asbestos fibers may stay in the air for a long time.

How great is the asbestos problem in El Dorado County?

Limited monitoring by the California Air Resources Board indicates that elevated levels of asbestos in the ambient air do not appear to be widespread in El Dorado County. A multi-agency task force found that most people in the area do not appear to be exposed to significant risks from naturally occurring asbestos, unless they are near sources of dust, such as unpaved roads. People living near these sources may be exposed to elevated levels of asbestos.

How can I find out whether I have any asbestos on my property?

To find out whether asbestos is in the rock or soil, obtain a study of your property by a licensed geologist. Such studies may require digging pits or drilling holes, which may require new landscaping. If you are concerned about asbestos inside your home, contact a certified asbestos consultant and/or a certified analytical laboratory. A list of these certified consultants and laboratories may be available in the Yellow Pages® of your local telephone directory under “Laboratories? Analytical.” Be advised that collection and analysis of samples can be expensive.

What can I do to minimize my exposure to airborne asbestos?

If asbestos is found on or near your property, do what you can to minimize dust. Some suggestions include:

- Consider paving walkways, driveways, and roadways that may contain serpentine rock or soil.
- Redirect recreational activities that may increase dust to areas where the rock and soil don’t contain asbestos.
- Cover serpentine rock and soil in yards and gardens with clean soil and vegetation
- Have family members and guests remove shoes at the door to reduce track-in dust (a major contributor to contamination on indoor areas by outdoor asbestos fibers).
- Keep windows and doors closed on windy days and during periods when nearby serpentine rock may be disturbed, such as during grading and construction.
- Use a wet rag when dusting furniture and floors, as opposed to a feather duster that may stir up the dust.
- Use washable area rugs on floors.