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DIVISION OF COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES
WILLIAM J. BRAND, ADMINISTRATOR

PROGRAM NOTICE 09-04

TO: Weatherization Coordinators
FROM: Jim Newton, Bureau of Weatherization
DATE: November 24, 2009
RE: Vermiculite and Exhaust Fans

Clarification of Vermiculite Policy for Attics

There has been confusion regarding what to do when vermiculite is in an attic. The policy that should be followed is detailed in the enclosed revised Work Standards.

The changes include the following:

- EPA and OSHA regulations (29 CFR, Part 1910.1001) define asbestos containing materials as material containing more than 1 percent asbestos. Therefore, if the test results show the vermiculite sample contains 1 percent or less asbestos, the vermiculite is considered to be non asbestos-containing material and the attic or walls can be insulated.
- If vermiculite is in an attic and it has not yet been tested or has been tested and testing shows it contains more than 1 percent asbestos, operate the blower door in the pressurization mode.
- If vermiculite is in an attic and testing shows it contains no more than 1 percent asbestos, the blower door can be operated in the depressurization mode.
- When tests indicate the vermiculite in the attic contains more than 1 percent asbestos, attic bypass sealing should not be done nor should the attic be insulated. To reduce the risk of moisture problems in the attic, attic ventilation must be done, if needed, to ensure one (1) square foot of venting for every 300 square feet of attic floor space. This is different than our normal attic venting standard of one (1) square foot of venting for every 600 square feet of attic floor space (Section 5012). This is because attic bypass sealing, which helps to prevent moisture problems in attics, is not being done.

Other energy efficiency measures and health and safety measures may be done to the home. The blower door should be operated in the pressurization mode.

Installation of Electrical Devices (bathroom fans, etc.):

There have been questions from agencies about what type of electrical license is needed or if a licensed electrician is needed to install electrical devices such as exhaust fans. Because of the different types and classifications of electrical licenses, along with the different city and county codes, it

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is not possible for us to have a policy that will cover every situation. Therefore, you will need to direct your questions to the electrical specialist at the Iowa Department of Public Safety and/or your local code people. The contact information for the electrical specialist at Public Safety is: 1-866-923-1082 or email at elecinfo@dps.state.ia.us.

Cc: Bureau staff

2150 SUSPECTED ASBESTOS

2151 Friable Asbestos

Weatherization measures will not be installed if they will disturb suspected friable asbestos. Program funds may not be used for asbestos abatement.

2152 Slate Sided Dwellings

Slate siding and insul-brick siding are considered presumed asbestos containing material (PACM) because some of it contains asbestos. Slate siding policies and safe work practices are discussed in Section 2110.

2153 Vermiculite

Vermiculite has been used as an insulating material in some homes. Much of the world's supply of vermiculite came from one mine in Montana. Because this mine had a natural deposit of asbestos, the vermiculite collected from the mine may be contaminated with asbestos. If vermiculite is found in a home, there is no way to tell if it contains asbestos without testing it. If an agency is not willing to collect a sample to test for asbestos, the agency may hire an outside contractor to collect the sample.

EPA and OSHA regulations (29 CFR, Part 1910.1001) define asbestos containing materials as material containing more than 1% asbestos. Therefore, if the test results show the vermiculite sample contains 1% of less asbestos, the vermiculite is considered to be non-asbestos containing material and the attic or walls can be insulated.

If vermiculite is in the walls.

- Operate the blower door in pressurization mode to complete the evaluation.
- Have a sample of the vermiculite tested to see if it contains asbestos.
- If test results show there is no asbestos in the vermiculite:
 - Insulate the walls if needed.

- The blower door can then be operated in the depressurization mode for inspection.
- If test results show there is asbestos in the vermiculite:
 - Do not insulate the walls.
 - Other work may be done on the home.
 - Operate the blower door in the pressurization mode to complete the inspection

If vermiculite is in the attic.

- Operate the blower door in pressurization mode to complete the evaluation.
- Have a sample of the vermiculite tested to see if it contains asbestos.
- If test results indicate there is no asbestos in the vermiculite:
 - Complete attic air sealing.
 - Insulate over the existing vermiculite.
 - The blower door can then be operated in the depressurization mode for inspection.
- If test results indicate there is asbestos in the vermiculite:
 - Do not seal attic bypass.
 - Do not insulate the attic.
 - To reduce the risk of moisture problems in the attic, the attic must be properly ventilated. If needed, add ventilation to ensure one (1) square foot of venting for every 300 square feet of attic. This is necessary because the bypasses are not sealed.
 - Other energy efficiency measures and health and safety measures may be done.
 - Operate the blower door in the pressurization mode to complete the inspection