

CALGARY MOLD REMEDIATION

Health & Safety

What Health Canada and Alberta say about disturbed asbestos, mold and lead, protective equipment, and what to do right now if something was disturbed

4 Expert Answers from Remediation IQ

calgarymoldremediation.com/construction-brain

Table of Contents

1. Safe way to leave a room after disturbing possible asbestos in Calgary?
.....
2. What does Health Canada say about undisturbed asbestos in Calgary homes?
.....
3. Pets and mold in a Calgary basement, what precautions?
.....
4. Can mold in a Calgary basement affect asthma?
.....

Safe way to leave a room after disturbing possible asbestos in Calgary?

If you have already disturbed material that may contain asbestos, stop the work immediately, leave the area, and do not go back in.

Close the door behind you if there is one. Keep everyone else out of the space, including pets. Do not sweep, vacuum or wipe any dust or debris.

Once you are out, the next step is testing, not cleaning. In a home built before 1990, Alberta OHS bulletin ASB004 names drywall mud, plaster, ceiling tiles and vinyl flooring among materials that may contain asbestos, and the Alberta Asbestos Abatement Manual adds stipple and acoustic finishes. The only way to know whether the material you disturbed contains asbestos is to have a bulk sample analysed by polarized light microscopy in a lab. Published Calgary-area prices for bulk sample testing run roughly \$65 to \$145 per sample, with packages of several samples costing less per sample. Do not re-enter the room to collect samples yourself. A qualified contractor can take samples safely.

If testing confirms asbestos-containing material, the Alberta OHS Code requires any employer carrying out removal or abatement to file a notification with a Director at least 72 hours before work begins that may release fibres. That notification is filed online through Alberta's asbestos portal. Every worker who enters an asbestos restricted area must hold a current government-approved Alberta asbestos worker card, issued after a course of at least 14 net instructional hours and a written exam with a pass mark of 80 per cent. The OHS Code also requires waste to be stored and transported in sealed, impervious, labelled containers. In Calgary, asbestos waste goes to Shepard landfill only, by appointment, with a permit from the City, and loads must be wetted, double-bagged in 6-mil polyethylene and sealed before transport.

Health Canada's advice is direct: do not disturb asbestos-containing material and do not attempt to remove it yourself. Alberta Environment's guidance says to restrict handling of friable asbestos-containing materials to qualified personnel. For now, the safest position is to leave the room sealed and get a contractor in to assess and sample it before anyone re-enters.

Before you hire anyone for this job, ask them directly: has the 72-hour OHS notification been filed for this project, can each worker entering the area show you their valid asbestos worker card, and will the clearance air testing after the work be done by a consultant independent of the abatement crew?

For the sampling itself, the form on this page reaches abatement contractors in the Calgary Construction Network directory.

What does Health Canada say about undisturbed asbestos in Calgary homes?

Health Canada's position is straightforward: asbestos-containing material that is undisturbed, in good condition, and sealed behind walls, floors, or isolated in an attic presents no significant health risk. If you are not planning to renovate or demolish, leaving it alone is a legitimate option.

That said, the pre-1990 threshold matters here. Alberta OHS bulletin ASB004 states that buildings constructed before 1990 carry a higher risk that some materials used in construction may contain asbestos. The Alberta Asbestos Abatement Manual adds that asbestos has been found in buildings constructed after 1980 into the early 1990s, so the line is not perfectly sharp. Materials the bulletin lists include ceiling tiles, drywall mud, exterior stucco and siding, pipe insulation, plaster, roofing materials, vermiculite insulation, and vinyl floor tiles, among others.

What changes the picture

The key word in Health Canada's guidance is "undisturbed." Once you plan work that cuts, scrapes, sands, or otherwise disturbs a suspect material, the calculus shifts entirely. Alberta Environment advises not disturbing friable asbestos-containing materials and restricting handling to qualified personnel. Health Canada specifically says not to disturb vermiculite or attempt to remove it yourself, and to hire a qualified asbestos removal specialist. If you have already disturbed a material and are not sure what it contains, stop the work, leave the area, keep others and pets out, close the door, do not sweep or vacuum, and have the material tested before anyone returns.

For any renovation or demolition in Calgary, the City requires an Asbestos Abatement Information Form before a building or demolition permit is released for structures built before 1990. The form asks the applicant to declare either that all materials with the potential to release fibres have been removed from the project area, or that none are present. A building permit is not a permit to perform abatement; jurisdiction for the work itself sits with Alberta Occupational Health and Safety. Any contractor doing the removal must file a 72-hour notification with Alberta OHS before beginning work that may release fibres, and every worker entering an asbestos restricted area must carry a valid government-approved Alberta asbestos worker card. There is no contractor licence for asbestos abatement in Alberta; the worker card and the employer's notification are the credentials the law creates.

If you want bulk samples tested first, published Calgary-area prices read in September 2026 run \$65 to \$145 per sample, with packages of several samples costing less per sample. Asbestos removal generally runs \$4 to \$10 per square foot, and an air clearance test after abatement runs roughly \$200 to \$700 per area. Asbestos waste in Calgary goes to Shepard landfill only, by appointment, with a permit, packaged in double-bagged 6-mil polyethylene, wetted and sealed.

If you do get removal quotes, check each one for containment, independent air clearance testing, disposal at Shepard, and the OHS 72-hour notification, because a lower number that omits any one of those items is not actually a lower price for the same job. Contractors reached through the form on this page can quote the testing first and the removal only if it is needed.

Q3

Pets and mold in a Calgary basement, what precautions?

The sources we use do not give pet-specific mould advice, so the practical approach is to treat pets the way the guidance treats people who are not doing the work: keep them out of the area. How much else you need to do depends on how much mould there is and whether the material underneath it is porous.

Keep Pets Out Until the Work Is Done

Health Canada describes mould patches as small (one to three patches, each under one square metre), medium (more than three patches, or a single patch between one and three square metres), or extensive (any patch larger than three square metres). A person in good health can clean a small area with water and dish detergent, wearing safety glasses, a disposable N95 respirator and gloves. Pets should be moved to another part of the house and kept away from the area during cleaning and until surfaces are fully dry. Alberta Health Services notes that porous materials such as drywall, carpet and ceiling tiles typically need to be removed rather than cleaned, so if the mould has grown into the material, keep pets out until that removal is finished.

For medium or extensive mould, CMHC says medium areas should be handled by qualified and trained maintenance staff, and extensive areas by qualified and trained mould remediation contractors. In either case, keep pets and people who are not doing the work out of the basement for the duration. The Alberta OHS bulletin notes mould can begin growing within 24 to 48 hours on a damp surface, so fixing the moisture source, whether a leaking pipe, condensation or groundwater, is as important as the cleaning itself. Health Canada advises keeping indoor relative humidity between 30 and 50 per cent to prevent regrowth.

A few practical points worth knowing:

- Alberta Health Services advises that air testing for mould is usually not recommended, especially when you can already see it.
- There is no numerical mould exposure limit in Canada. Health Canada explains that the variability in how people respond to mould makes it impossible to set one, so the focus stays on removing the mould and correcting the moisture.

- We found no City of Calgary permit for mould remediation and no Alberta licence or certification for mould remediation contractors. Ask any contractor you hire what training their workers have completed and what containment they will use to keep spores from spreading to the rest of the house during removal.
- If your basement was finished before 1990, drywall, joint compound or ceiling tiles that need to come out may contain asbestos. Alberta OHS bulletin ASB004 identifies drywall mud and ceiling tiles as materials with a higher risk of asbestos content in pre-1990 buildings. Have suspect materials tested before any cutting or removal begins.

For a medium or extensive job, published Calgary-area prices read in September 2026 range from roughly \$1,800 to \$6,000 for a medium basement wall area, and \$3,000 to \$15,000 or more for a whole basement. A mould inspection or air-quality test, if you want a baseline assessment before work starts, runs \$200 to \$800.

If you want quotes from local remediation contractors, the request form on this page forwards your details to contractors listed in the Calgary Construction Network directory. Before you agree to anything, ask the contractor to show you what the quote includes for containment and for a post-remediation check, and when it will be safe to let your pets back into the basement.

Can mold in a Calgary basement affect asthma?

Health Canada does not give a mould level that is safe or unsafe for any person: it says the number of mould species and the variability in how people respond preclude setting exposure limits. If you have asthma, that is a question for your doctor. What Health Canada does say clearly is this: control humidity, repair water damage promptly, and clean any visible or concealed mould.

The size of the affected area shapes what you should do next. Health Canada and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation describe three bands. A small area is one to three patches, each under one square metre (about ten square feet); a person in good health can clean that with water and dish detergent, wearing safety glasses, a disposable N95 respirator and household disposable gloves. A medium area is more than three patches, or a single patch larger than one square metre but under three square metres; CMHC says that calls for qualified and trained maintenance staff. An extensive area, any patch larger than three square metres, calls for qualified and trained mould remediation contractors.

A few things matter before you start cleaning anything in a pre-1990 Calgary home:

- If the basement has drywall compound, vinyl floor tiles or stipple, disturbing them to reach mould behind a wall or under flooring raises an asbestos question. Alberta OHS bulletin ASB004 names drywall mud and vinyl flooring for buildings built before 1990, and the Alberta Asbestos Abatement Manual adds stippled finishes.
- Alberta Health Services notes that porous materials such as drywall, carpet and ceiling tiles typically need removal, not just surface cleaning.
- Alberta Health Services also says air testing for mould is usually not recommended, especially when you can already see it. Paying for air sampling before you have dealt with visible mould is rarely useful.
- Keep indoor relative humidity between 30 and 50 per cent. Mould can begin growing within 24 to 48 hours on a damp surface, so fixing the moisture source comes before any cleaning.

If you have already disturbed material in a pre-1990 home and are not sure what it contains, stop the work now, leave the area, keep everyone including pets out, close the door, and do not sweep or vacuum. Have the material tested before anyone goes back in.

If the area is medium or extensive, or if removing affected drywall or flooring is part of the job, submitting a request through the form on this page will put your details in front of local remediation contractors listed in the Calgary Construction Network directory.

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Calgary Mold Remediation. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified, licensed contractors and your local building authority (the City of Calgary or your

own municipality) and Alberta Occupational Health and Safety before starting any asbestos, mould or lead paint project. Information is current as of October 25, 2026 and may change. Visit **calgarymoldremediation.com** for the latest answers.