News of Interest for and from the Connecticut Association of Home Inspectors, Inc.

CAHI MONTHLY NEWS

Aug/Sept 2015 Volume 8, Issue 8

Presidents Corner

I have heard frequently from Realtors over the last several months that referring a home inspector has become a huge liability. Several Realtors have complained about over zealous inspectors who lack knowledge but go through a home like gang busters, making mountains out of mole hills, and sometimes even worse, mole hills out of mountains. When they ultimately miss something or do not satisfy the expectations of their clients, the Realtors hear about it. Several have told me that they no longer refer home inspectors but instead tell their clients to find one in the yellow pages or on line. This on the advice of their "corporate" legal advisors.

I have always felt that our organization should be doing more to gain recognition in the Real Estate arena. We are developing LinkedIn and Facebook pages which we will use to generate traffic to our website in hopes of getting more perspective buyers to find and hire a CAHI inspector. We will also be advertising on a trial basis in the Home Navigator. This magazine gets out to a lot of people and is relatively inexpensive to advertise in. Maybe those Realtors who do not refer home inspectors will steer their clients to our website instead of the yellow pages.

In an attempt to appeal to those Realtors who do still refer home inspectors, we are considering sponsoring one or more Realtor boards which will allow us to have a table and peddle our wears outside their meetings.

The time is right to make a move through marketing our organization. While CAHIs main objective is to educate our membership, I feel it is also important to raise us above the rest of the inspectors in the state by touting the quality and level of the education we provide, as well as generate work where we can.

I also encourage all our members to use our logo as much as you can, on websites, letterheads, reports, any place you can fit it. Let's let the Real Estate world know who we are.

Stan

MONTHLY MEETINGS – Details & Info

CAHI's regular monthly meetings are held at the Best Western located at 201 Washington Ave (RT 5), North Haven. Meetings are free to members. Most meetings are on the fourth Wednesday of the month from 7-9pm. Guests are always welcome! Guests may attend 2 free monthly meetings to experience our presentations, meet our members, and receive a CE attendance certificate.

Joining CAHI may be done at anytime of the year through our Membership Page

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Meeting Dates!

September 23rd Meeting

Absolute Tank

A representative from Absolute tank will be discussing Buried oil tanks, what to look for, underground leaks, removal and cleanup etc.

October 2015 – *Coming soon*

The technology age has been here for quite a while. Personally, I cannot keep up with it! One thing I have wanted to do is add some video to my website and any other marketing. Younger people today always want the video proof; police brutality, terrorism, sports, and just about everything else on line. Paparazzi get paid for photos but they retire on juicy videos.

Marketing Tip for Inspectors: Online Promotional Videos

"Once a new technology rolls over you,
if you're not part of the steamroller, you're part of the road."

-- Stewart Brand

Inspectors who are marketing-savvy should maintain their websites by occasionally adding consumer-targeted videos. As technology becomes cheaper and more dummy-proof, it's easy for an inspector to shoot a short video of him at an inspection job and upload it to his website. Such a video might give consumers some basic home maintenance tips. Short videos on your website can serve several purposes.

Videos can show your prospective clients:

- what you look like, as well as a flavor of your personality;
- an indication of how you conduct yourself on the inspection;
- that you're knowledgeable about inspections, even if it's a brief video (which it should be);
- that you're busy with work and not sitting around waiting for the phone to ring;
- that you're comfortable with technology; and
- that you're confident engaging your prospective clients by putting yourself out there on the Internet.

Consumers will naturally feel more comfortable with an inspector they can see in action before hiring him/her, which is actually a rare opportunity for inspectors who normally don't meet their clients until after they're hired.

Think of your video as an audition that you're offering your website visitors. At the very least, it's a visual advertisement, which consumers are used to watching for the products and services they want to buy. All things being equal—including licensing, experience, reporting style, and overall pricing—the inspector who offers a video showing himself in action on the job will surge ahead of the competition. Creating familiarity ahead of your actual appointment is something that will stick in your prospective clients' minds. As the saying goes, "A picture is worth a thousand words."

Some Do's and Don'ts for Website Videos

Do:

- Write a basic script beforehand so that you have a general idea of what you want to say during your commercial. The more comfortable you are with the material, the better it will sound when recorded.
- Appear in your own videos. Unless you look like a serial killer, you should be the star of your own website videos.
- Rehearse. If you have a camcorder (or even a cell phone with video capabilities), take some time to practice being on camera. When the camera turns on, even a confident inspector can lose his or her composure and come off as uncomfortable, unsure and maybe even unqualified. We typically look and sound different when recorded, and getting comfortable with those differences before your shoot will translate to a better commercial. If you don't have a camcorder, practicing in front of a mirror is helpful.
- If you're shooting in a studio, wear crisp-looking attire, which translates well on camera. Consider having your clothes professionally dry-cleaned and pressed. You want to look as professional as possible.
- If you're a man, considering getting a haircut a few days before the shoot and shave as late as possible before shooting (you might even want to consider bringing your razor to the shoot and shaving there).
- Dress appropriately for the image you want to present to your viewers.
- Do vocal warm-ups beforehand. As silly as it may feel, it will help loosen your vocal cords and encourage you to relax. Having a confident and commanding voice can really help you connect with your commercial's viewers. It doesn't need to be much: clear your throat, open and close your mouth a few times, and maybe try a few tongue twisters that you remember from your childhood. What's most important is that you prepare yourself to speak clearly and confidently.
- Introduce yourself on camera. Don't assume the viewer knows who you are.
- Introduce everyone else appearing in the video with you. This is simply demonstrating common courtesy and respect for your crew and colleagues.
- Make eye contact with your viewers by looking into the camera lens. This will show that you're engaged and ready to demonstrate your prowess as an inspector. Try not to look down between sentences, and if you rely on a script, use it only as a prompt, rather than read from it, which can convey shyness and a lack of confidence.
- Smile! Remember, your clients want to feel that they can trust you and be comfortable asking you questions about their inspection. If you appear relaxed, comfortable and happy, your potential clients will be relaxed, comfortable and happy while watching your commercial, which will give you a head-start after they hire you.
- Engage in some inspection activity. Your video should show you doing something.
- Mention your website address throughout the video.
- End your video with a brief sales pitch, such as "Be sure to contact ABC Inspections if you're thinking about buying a new home."
- Provide your business name, logo and contact information, including your service area, as a superimposed image before your video ends. In case it gets uploaded to other sites, such as YouTube, your contact information should be a part of the video that cannot be edited out.
- Think about your script from a search engine optimization standpoint. According to Google, their new audio indexing system uses speech recognition technology to transform speech into text and then ranks videos by spoken keyword relevance, YouTube metadata, and freshness.
- Copyright your video using your business name, the copyright symbol and the year. Again, if you super-

impose your copyright notation at the bottom of the last few frames of video, it will be difficult to edit out.

- Catalog multiple videos on your website using titles and brief descriptions that will be of interest to consumers so that they can find them easily, both while they're searching the Internet and searching your site.
- Take advantage of social networking sites. Do you have a Twitter account or Facebook page? Be sure to post a link to your latest videos there to drive traffic to your website.

Don't:

- If you decide to shoot your video indoors, don't wear green. You may want to use a green screen to superimpose a different background in your video. If you're wearing clothes that are similar to the color of a green screen, it will be hard for your or your editor to remove the screen without also removing part of your body. You should also avoid wearing stripes (particularly tight ones), bright red, or all white or all black, as these generally look bad or visually distort in the video. Also, avoid using an all-black background, as this tends to darken the overall look of the video.
- Don't make your video a straight-ahead sales pitch. You should be (mostly) providing a service rather than annoying your website visitors with an infomercial. While this approach has some limited value, it will be far more interesting for your visitors to watch you in consumer-targeted videos rather than commercials, and they will be less likely to be put off and click off.
- Don't stand in front of the camera reading a script word for word. This is boring video. You should be engaged in an activity and speaking at a natural pace. Pretend that the camera is a person who's accompanying you on part of the inspection.
- Don't act lethargic. Be confident in your stance to reflect your confidence in your inspecting abilities. The camera will tend to cloak subtle movements and weak posture. You'll have to go a little bit over-the-top for things to look right on film. Be sure to stand tall with your shoulders back. Plant both feet solidly on the ground, and avoid rocking from side to side. If you don't know what to do with your hands, try holding a tool or device that you normally use during an inspection (such as a clipboard, PDA, or flashlight), or stand with your hands behind your back (similar to the military parade rest position). Don't lean on anything. Be expressive in your movements when they're intentional, and avoid nervous movements, such as tapping your feet, rocking, or fussing with a prop.
- Don't make off-color jokes or engage in horseplay during your spot. You don't want to have such moments preserved for time immemorial on the Web. Remember who you're creating your videos for and how you want your inspection business represented.
- Don't go crazy with post-production. Loud or fast music, and special effects and quick or flashy edits will do more to distract the viewer than add something worth watching.
- Don't make your video longer than two or three minutes. Keep the topic brief.
- Don't post your videos in multiple locations. They belong on your website, but you may want to consider having them hosted on YouTube where they're more likely to show up in video searches. Remember that Google owns YouTube, so you'll have a greater chance of having your video found by consumers who will search the Web for an inspector in your service area. Make your videos public videos, and describe and tag them appropriately using keywords that will maximize SEO hits for your business. If you use Twitter, Facebook or some other social networking tool, post a link for the video so that you drive traffic to your website—*that's your ultimate goal*.

In the end, the most important thing is to be yourself. These tips should help you prepare, but if you over-think things, you might start second-guessing every word and every movement you make on camera. Before your shoot, take a moment to remind yourself that you're a great CAHI inspector and that people ought to hire you. Take a deep breath, smile, and say, **"Take one."**

After last month's meeting there was a short discussion by a few of us on the topic of hazardous materials and more specifically asbestos. Some of you thought a monthly class on asbestos might be interesting and I agree. However, it takes a few months to set up speakers and I wanted to feed the interest now. So here are some asbestos related articles. First one is from the InterNACHI site and is available to members for general use including inclusion in newsletters.

Asbestos

What is Asbestos?

Asbestos is a mineral fiber that can be positively identified only with a special type of microscope. There are several types of asbestos fibers. In the past, asbestos was added to a variety of products to strengthen them and to provide heat insulation and fire resistance. Inspectors can supplement their knowledge with the information offered in this guide.

How Can Asbestos Affect My Health?

From studies of people who were exposed to asbestos in factories and shipyards, we know that breathing high levels of asbestos fibers can lead to an increased risk of lung cancer in the forms of mesothelioma, which is a cancer of the lining of the chest and the abdominal cavity, and asbestosis, in which the lungs become scarred with fibrous tissue.

The risk of lung cancer and mesothelioma increase with the number of fibers inhaled. The risk of lung cancer from inhaling asbestos fibers is also greater if you smoke. People who get asbestosis have usually been exposed to high levels of asbestos for a long time. The symptoms of these diseases do not usually appear until about 20 to 30 years after the first exposure to asbestos. Most people exposed to small amounts of asbestos, as we all are in our daily lives, do not develop these health problems. However, if disturbed, asbestos material may release asbestos fibers, which can be inhaled into the lungs. The fibers can remain there for a long time, increasing the risk of disease. Asbestos material that would crumble easily if handled, or that has been sawed, scraped, or sanded into a powder, is more likely to create a health hazard.

Where Can I Find Asbestos and When Can it Be a Problem?

Most products made today do not contain asbestos. Those few products made which still contain asbestos that could be inhaled are required to be labeled as such. However, until the 1970s, many types of building products and insulation materials used in homes contained asbestos. Common products that might have contained asbestos in the past, and conditions which may release fibers, include:

- steam pipes, boilers and furnace ducts insulated with an asbestos blanket or asbestos paper tape. These materials may release asbestos fibers if damaged, repaired, or removed improperly;
- resilient floor tiles (vinyl asbestos, asphalt and rubber), the backing on vinyl sheet flooring, and adhesives used for installing floor tile. Sanding tiles can release fibers, and so may scraping or sanding the backing of sheet flooring during removal;
- cement sheet, millboard and paper used as insulation around furnaces and wood-burning stoves. Repairing or removing appliances may release asbestos fibers, and so may cutting, tearing, sanding, drilling, or sawing insulation;

- door gaskets in furnaces, wood stoves and coal stoves. Worn seals can release asbestos fibers during use;
- soundproofing or decorative material sprayed on walls and ceilings. Loose, crumbly or water-damaged material may release fibers, and so will sanding, drilling or scraping the material;
- patching and joint compounds for walls and ceilings, and textured paints. Sanding, scraping, or drilling these surfaces may release asbestos fibers;
- asbestos cement roofing, shingles and siding. These products are not likely to release asbestos fibers unless sawed, drilled or cut;
- artificial ashes and embers sold for use in gas-fired fireplaces, and other older household products, such as fireproof gloves, stove-top pads, ironing board covers and certain hairdryers; and
- automobile brake pads and linings, clutch facings and gaskets.

Where Asbestos Hazards May Be Found in the Home

- Some roofing and siding shingles are made of asbestos cement.
- Houses built between 1930 and 1950 may have asbestos as insulation.
- Asbestos may be present in textured paint and in patching compounds used on wall and ceiling joints. Their use was banned in 1977.
- Artificial ashes and embers sold for use in gas-fired fireplaces may contain asbestos.
- Older products, such as stove-top pads, may have some asbestos compounds.
- Walls and floors around wood-burning stoves may be protected with asbestos paper, millboard or cement sheets.
- Asbestos is found in some vinyl floor tiles and the backing on vinyl sheet flooring and adhesives.
- Hot water and steam pipes in older houses may be coated with an asbestos material or covered with an asbestos blanket or tape.
- Oil and coal furnaces and door gaskets may have asbestos insulation.

What Should Be Done About Asbestos in the Home?

If you think asbestos may be in your home, don't panic. Usually, the best thing to do is to leave asbestos material that is in good condition alone. Generally, material in good condition will not release asbestos fibers. There is no danger unless the asbestos is disturbed and fibers are released and then inhaled into the lungs. Check material regularly if you suspect it may contain asbestos. Don't touch it, but look for signs of wear or damage, such as tears, abrasions or water damage. Damaged material may release asbestos fibers. This is particularly true if you often disturb it by hitting, rubbing or handling it, or if it is exposed to extreme vibration or air flow. Sometimes, the best way to deal with slightly damaged material is to limit access to the area and not touch or disturb it. Discard damaged or worn asbestos gloves, stove-top pads and ironing board covers. Check with local health, environmental or other appropriate agencies to find out proper handling and disposal procedures. If asbestos material is more than slightly damaged, or if you are going to make changes in your home that might disturb it, repair or removal by a professional is needed. Before you have your house remodeled, find out whether asbestos materials are present.

How to Identify Materials that Contain Asbestos

You can't tell whether a material contains asbestos simply by looking at it, unless it is labeled. If in doubt, treat the material as if it contains asbestos, or have it sampled and analyzed by a qualified professional. A professional should take samples for analysis, since a professional knows what to look for, and because there may be an increased health risk if fibers are released. In fact, if done incorrectly, sampling can be more hazardous than

leaving the material alone. Taking samples yourself is not recommended. If you nevertheless choose to take the samples yourself, take care not to release asbestos fibers into the air or onto yourself. Material that is in good condition and will not be disturbed (by remodeling, for example) should be left alone. Only material that is damaged or will be disturbed should be sampled. Anyone who samples asbestos-containing materials should have as much information as possible on the handling of asbestos before sampling and, at a minimum, should observe the following procedures:

- Make sure no one else is in the room when sampling is done.
- Wear disposable gloves or wash hands after sampling.
- Shut down any heating or cooling systems to minimize the spread of any released fibers.
- Do not disturb the material any more than is needed to take a small sample.
- Place a plastic sheet on the floor below the area to be sampled.
- Wet the material using a fine mist of water containing a few drops of detergent before taking the sample. The water/detergent mist will reduce the release of asbestos fibers.
- Carefully cut a piece from the entire depth of the material using a small knife, corer or other sharp object. Place the small piece into a clean container (a 35-mm film canister, small glass or plastic vial, or high-quality resealable plastic bag).
- Tightly seal the container after the sample is in it.
- Carefully dispose of the plastic sheet. Use a damp paper towel to clean up any material on the outside of the container or around the area sampled. Dispose of asbestos materials according to state and local procedures.
- Label the container with an identification number and clearly state when and where the sample was taken.
- Patch the sampled area with the smallest possible piece of duct tape to prevent fiber release.
- Send the sample to an asbestos analysis laboratory accredited by the National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program (NVLAP) at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). Your state or local health department may also be able to help.

How to Manage an Asbestos Problem

If the asbestos material is in good shape and will not be disturbed, do nothing! If it is a problem, there are two types of corrections: repair and removal. Repair usually involves either sealing or covering asbestos material. Sealing (encapsulation) involves treating the material with a sealant that either binds the asbestos fibers together or coats the material so that fibers are not released. Pipe, furnace and boiler insulation can sometimes be repaired this way. This should be done only by a professional trained to handle asbestos safely. Covering (enclosure) involves placing something over or around the material that contains asbestos to prevent the release of fibers. Exposed insulated piping may be covered with a protective wrap or jacket. With any type of repair, the asbestos remains in place. Repair is usually cheaper than removal, but it may make removal of asbestos later (if found to be necessary) more difficult and costly. Repairs can either be major or minor. Major repairs must be done only by a professional trained in methods for safely handling asbestos. Minor repairs should also be done by professionals, since there is always a risk of exposure to fibers when asbestos is disturbed.

Repairs

Doing minor repairs yourself is not recommended, since improper handling of asbestos materials can create a hazard where none existed. If you nevertheless choose to do minor repairs, you should have as much information as possible on the handling of asbestos before doing anything. Contact your state or local health department or regional EPA office for information about asbestos training programs in your area. Your local school district may also have information about asbestos professionals and training programs for school buildings. Even if you have completed a training program, do not try anything more than minor repairs. Before undertaking minor repairs, carefully examine the area around the damage to make sure it is stable. As a general rule, any damaged area which is bigger than the size of your hand is not considered a minor repair.

Before undertaking minor repairs, be sure to follow all the precautions described previously for sampling asbestos material. Always wet the asbestos material using a fine mist of water containing a few drops of detergent. Commercial products designed to fill holes and seal damaged areas are available. Small areas of material, such as pipe insulation, can be covered by wrapping a special fabric, such as re-wettable glass cloth, around it. These products are available from stores (listed in the telephone directory under "Safety Equipment and Clothing") which specialize in asbestos materials and safety items. Removal is usually the most expensive method and, unless required by state or local regulations, should be the last option considered in most situations. This is because removal poses the greatest risk of fiber release. However, removal may be required when remodeling or making major changes to your home that will disturb asbestos material. Also, removal may be called for if asbestos material is damaged extensively and cannot be otherwise repaired. Removal is complex and must be done only by a contractor with special training. Improper removal may actually increase the health risks to you and your family.

Asbestos Professionals: Who Are They and What Can They Do?

Asbestos professionals are trained in handling asbestos material. The type of professional will depend on the type of product and what needs to be done to correct the problem. You may hire a general asbestos contractor or, in some cases, a professional trained to handle specific products containing asbestos.

Asbestos professionals can conduct inspections, take samples of suspected material, assess its condition, and advise on the corrections that are needed, as well as who is qualified to make these corrections. Once again, material in good condition need not be sampled unless it is likely to be disturbed. Professional correction or abatement contractors repair and remove asbestos materials.

Some firms offer combinations of testing, assessment and correction. A professional hired to assess the need for corrective action should not be connected with an asbestos-correction firm. It is better to use two different firms so that there is no conflict of interest. Services vary from one area to another around the country.

The federal government offers training courses for asbestos professionals around the country. Some state and local governments also offer or require training or certification courses. Ask asbestos professionals to document their completion of federal or state-approved training. Each person performing work in your home should provide proof of training and licensing in asbestos work, such as completion of EPA-approved training. State and local health departments or EPA regional offices may have listings of licensed professionals in your area.

If you have a problem that requires the services of asbestos professionals, check their credentials carefully. Hire professionals who are trained, experienced, reputable and accredited -- especially if accreditation is required by state or local laws. Before hiring a professional, ask for references from previous clients. Find out if they were satisfied. Ask whether the professional has handled similar situations. Get cost estimates from several professionals, as the charges for these services can vary.

Though private homes are usually not covered by the asbestos regulations that apply to schools and public buildings, professionals should still use procedures described in federal or state-approved training. Homeowners should be alert to the chance of misleading claims by asbestos consultants and contractors. There have been reports of firms incorrectly claiming that asbestos materials in homes must be replaced. In other cases, firms have encouraged unnecessary removal or performed it improperly. Unnecessary removal is a waste of money. Improper removal may actually increase the health risks to you and your family. To guard against this, know what services are available and what procedures and precautions are needed to do the job properly.

In addition to general asbestos contractors, you may select a roofing, flooring or plumbing contractor trained to handle asbestos when it is necessary to remove and replace roofing, flooring, siding or asbestos-cement pipe that is part of a water system. Normally, roofing and flooring contractors are exempt from state and local licensing requirements because they do not perform any other asbestos-correction work.
Asbestos-containing automobile brake pads and linings, clutch facings and gaskets should be repaired and replaced only by a professional using special protective equipment. Many of these products are now available without asbestos.

If you hire a corrective-action contractor:

- Check with your local air pollution control board, the local agency responsible for worker safety, and the Better Business Bureau. Ask if the firm has had any safety violations. Find out if there are legal actions filed against it.
- Insist that the contractor use the proper equipment to do the job. The workers must wear approved respirators, gloves and other protective clothing.
- Before work begins, get a written contract specifying the work plan, cleanup, and the applicable federal, state and local regulations which the contractor must follow (such as notification requirements and asbestos disposal procedures). Contact your state and local health departments, EPA regional office, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's regional office to find out what the regulations are. Be sure the contractor follows local asbestos removal and disposal laws. At the end of the job, get written assurance from the contractor that all procedures have been followed.
- Assure that the contractor avoids spreading or tracking asbestos dust into other areas of your home. They should seal off the work area from the rest of the house using plastic sheeting and duct tape, and also turn off the heating and air conditioning system. For some repairs, such as pipe insulation removal, plastic bags may be adequate. They must be sealed with tape and properly disposed of when the job is complete.
- Make sure the work site is clearly marked as a hazardous area. Do not allow household members or pets into the area until work is completed.
- Insist that the contractor apply a wetting agent to the asbestos material with a hand sprayer that creates a fine mist before removal. Wet fibers do not float in the air as easily as dry fibers and will be easier to clean up.
- Make sure the contractor does not break removed material into smaller pieces. This could release asbestos fibers into the air. Pipe insulation was usually installed in pre-formed blocks and should be removed in complete pieces.
- Upon completion, assure that the contractor cleans the area well with wet mops, wet rags, sponges and/or HEPA (high-efficiency particulate air) vacuum cleaners. A regular vacuum cleaner must never be used. Wetting helps reduce the chance of spreading asbestos fibers in the air. All asbestos materials and disposable equipment and clothing used in the job must be placed in sealed, leakproof, and labeled plastic bags. The work site should be visually free of dust and debris. Air monitoring (to make sure there is no increase of asbestos fibers in the air) may be necessary to assure that the contractor's job is done properly. This should be done by someone not connected with the contractor.

Caution!

Do not dust, sweep or vacuum debris that may contain asbestos. These actions will disturb tiny asbestos fibers and may release them into the air. Remove dust by wet-mopping or with a special HEPA vacuum cleaner used by trained asbestos contractors.

The following is from the CT Department of Public Health web site and is aimed at educating the average citizen. The site also has information on licensing for asbestos professionals.

Department of Public Health

General Information About Asbestos

What is Asbestos?

"Asbestos" is a commonly used word that describes groups of naturally occurring fibrous minerals known to cause cancer. Individual fibers are invisible to the naked eye, and positive identification is required through laboratory analysis. Asbestos has been mined for use in over 3,000 products, due to its versatility and wide ranging properties such as resistance to fire and heat, chemical corrosion, flexibility and high tensile strength. Asbestos is regulated by federal, state and at times local agencies. The regulated fibrous asbestos minerals fall into one of six mineral fiber types: chrysotile (serpentine), crocidolite (riebeckite), amosite (cummingtonite-grunerite), anthophyllite, tremolite, and actinolite. Each of these fiber types has a distinctive fiber shape (morphology) and crystal habit, or manner in which it forms.

Is asbestos naturally occurring or only found in products?

Asbestos is naturally occurring and mined specifically for use in products. Information obtained from a document posted on the U.S.G.S. website for the eastern United States details a total of three hundred thirty-one (331) sites where naturally occurring asbestos of various amounts and types have been documented.

Is asbestos still mined today?

Yes. According to the United States Geological Services website, asbestos use has been declining over the last ten years, but is still an active commodity. The U.S.G.S. tracks all minerals and has industry trends and statistics since 1994 on its website.

Where is asbestos found, and what products contain asbestos?

Many homes, particularly those built before 1990, contain some type of asbestos-containing material (ACM). Some of the products where asbestos was commonly used in the manufacturing process, or may still be manufactured with asbestos, can be found on a list at the EPA region 6 asbestos website.

Some examples of these products include the following:

- Floor Covering and Adhesives
- Boilers
- Pipe Insulation
- Roof Flashing
- Roof Shingles
- Exterior Siding
- Ceiling Tiles
- Floor Tiles
- Plaster Walls
- Wallboard joint compound

A "friable" asbestos containing material (ACM) can be easily crushed, pulverized or reduced to powder by

hand pressure (materials such as insulation, ceiling tiles, dried out caulking.) A "non-friable" ACM can not be crushed, pulverized, or reduced to powder by hand pressure (materials such as table tops, roofing and flexible flooring.) In general, the more friable the material is, the greater the potential for asbestos exposure. Just because there is ACM present does not necessarily mean that it is a health risk, but you must be careful so the materials are not accidentally disturbed.

What does it look like? How do I know if its asbestos?

You can't tell if a product has asbestos by looking at it. Asbestos can only be verified by laboratory analysis. If you think that a product may contain asbestos and preparations are underway for remodeling or demolition, DPH recommends having the home inspected by a CT licensed Asbestos Inspector or Management Planner to identify suspect ACM. If no activity is taking place in an area where ACM is identified, it is best to leave the material in place and avoid disturbing it.

The handling and disturbance of ACM is subject to various state and federal regulations. The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) details requirements for licensing of asbestos abatement contractors and consultants, abatement work practices and criteria for determining when asbestos abatement has been properly completed. The best response for ACM which is in good condition is to **LEAVE IT ALONE!**

Asbestos Health Risks

Health risks commonly associated with exposure to asbestos include:

- Asbestosis – a condition in which the lungs become scarred with fibrous tissue making breathing more and more difficult, often requiring the victim to use oxygen.
- Cancer – cancer of the lungs is the most common cancer associated with exposure. Other areas may become cancerous including the throat, gastrointestinal tract, and kidneys.
- Mesothelioma - a rare, often fatal cancer, usually occurring in the chest cavity.

Exposure to asbestos alone is not the single determining factor as to whether or not an individual will contract an asbestos-related illness or disease. The levels of asbestos in air that may result in lung disease depend on several factors. According to the Agency for Toxic Substances Disease Registry (ATSDR,) other factors which must be considered include: the dose (how much,) the duration (how long,) the fiber type (mineral form and size distribution,) and how you come in contact with it. You must also consider the other chemicals you're exposed to and your age, sex, diet, family traits, lifestyle (including whether you smoke tobacco,) and state of health.

For more on the ATSDR toxicological profile for asbestos go to: http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxprofiles/tp61.pdf

Most of the data related to health effects from asbestos exposure are based on studies of asbestos workers in work environments known to be well above the typical back ground air. Indications from these studies are that lung scarring from repeated exposure, or asbestosis, often resulted from this type of environmental work exposure. **Workers may be at greater risk** of contracting lung cancer, particularly if they smoke. The risk from combining asbestos exposure with smoking is multiplied from 54 to 99 times.

The pleural cavity is the body cavity that encases your lungs. Diseases that effect this cavity are often called pleural diseases. Pleural diseases can be malignant (cancer causing) or nonmalignant. The nonmalignant pleural diseases caused by asbestos exposure are pleural plaques, pleural thickening and pleural effusion. More on these diseases can be found at the **Department of Health and Human Services** website.

Mesothelioma is the most deadly form of asbestos cancer, and affects the mesothelial cells (cells that make up the membrane that line the pleural cavity, abdominal cavity, and heart sac,) or those which line either the chest or abdomen. Pleural mesothelioma is when the cells of the chest wall are damaged. Peritoneal mesothelioma, cancer in the abdomen, is another form of mesothelioma thought to be caused by coughing up and swallowing asbestos fibers. Mesothelioma symptoms may not appear until 10 to 40 years after first exposed to asbestos.

As August ends the stores are already "putting back to school" and Halloween items on the shelves. The real estate market is still trying to get families new homes in the right school districts. Hopefully we are still supporting with home inspections and on the road daily. Here is an article from the National Safety Council.

Slow Down: Back to School Means Sharing the Road

Things get a little crazy on the roads during the school year: Buses are everywhere, kids on bikes are hurrying to get to school before the bell rings, harried parents are trying to drop their kids off before work.

It's never more important for drivers to slow down and pay attention than when kids are present – especially before and after school.

If You're Dropping Off

Schools often have very specific drop-off procedures for the school year. Make sure you know them for the safety of all kids. *More children are hit by cars near schools than at any other location*, according to the National Safe Routes to School program. The following apply to all school zones:

- Don't double park; it blocks visibility for other children and vehicles
- Don't load or unload children across the street from the school
- Carpool to reduce the number of vehicles at the school

Sharing the Road with Young Pedestrians

According to research by the National Safety Council, most of the children who lose their lives in bus-related incidents are 4 to 7 years old, and they're walking. They are hit by the bus, or by a motorist illegally passing a stopped bus. A few precautions go a long way toward keeping children safe:

Don't block the crosswalk when stopped at a red light or waiting to make a turn, forcing pedestrians to go around you; this could put them in the path of moving traffic

- In a school zone when flashers are blinking, stop and yield to pedestrians crossing the crosswalk or intersection
- Always stop for a school patrol officer or crossing guard holding up a stop sign
- Take extra care to look out for children in school zones, near playgrounds and parks, and in all residential areas
- Don't honk or rev your engine to scare a pedestrian, even if you have the right of way
- Never pass a vehicle stopped for pedestrians
- Always use extreme caution to avoid striking pedestrians wherever they may be, no matter who has the right of way

Sharing the Road with School Buses

If you're driving behind a bus, allow a greater following distance than if you were driving behind a car. It will give you more time to stop once the yellow lights start flashing. It is illegal in all 50 states to pass a school bus that is stopped to load or unload children.

Never pass a bus from behind – or from either direction if you're on an undivided road – if it is stopped to load or unload children

- If the yellow or red lights are flashing and the stop arm is extended, traffic must stop
- The area 10 feet around a school bus is the most dangerous for children; stop far enough back to allow them space to safely enter and exit the bus
- Be alert; children often are unpredictable, and they tend to ignore hazards and take risks

Sharing the Road with Bicyclists

On most roads, bicyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as vehicles, but bikes can be hard to see. Children riding bikes create special problems for drivers because usually they are not able to properly determine traffic conditions. The most common cause of collision is a driver turning left in front of a bicyclist.

- When passing a bicyclist, proceed in the same direction slowly, and leave 3 feet between your car and the cyclist
- When turning left and a bicyclist is approaching in the opposite direction, wait for the rider to pass
- If you're turning right and a bicyclists is approaching from behind on the right, let the rider go through the intersection first, and always use your turn signals
- Watch for bike riders turning in front of you without looking or signaling; children especially have a tendency to do this
- Be extra vigilant in school zones and residential neighborhoods
- Watch for bikes coming from driveways or behind parked cars
- Check side mirrors before opening your door

By exercising a little extra care and caution, drivers and pedestrians can co-exist safely in school zones.

WHY EPOXY IS A PREMIER GARAGE FLOOR COATING

One of the toughest and most durable finishes that you can apply to a garage floor today is an epoxy coating. Not only does it protect your garage floor, it can instantly transform your boring or ugly cement into a professional looking floor of beauty and function. And since the garage is fast becoming more than just a place where you park the car, the benefits of garage floor epoxy have quickly made it one of the top choices for garage flooring today.

Flooring by Mission Custom Builders

Used for both residential and commercial applications, epoxy will give your garage or shop floor that showroom shine that says "look at me"! Depending on which application you choose, you can select from a variety of understated solid colors and hues, to custom colors and blends of color flakes that match your style or even your favorite sports team.

So let's examine briefly what an epoxy coating really is, what the benefits are for you, learn how it's applied, and some of the costs involved.

WHAT IS GARAGE FLOOR EPOXY?

We'll start by ending some confusion about epoxy right now. An epoxy garage floor coating is not paint. Paint for garage floors is a latex acrylic product. Some paints will have a small percentage of epoxy added to the mix to make it more durable than standard paint, but it is still paint. These are known as epoxy paints or 1-part epoxy paint.

Epoxy is an actual thermosetting resin that is applied as a coating. It is formed when you mix one part epoxide resin with one part polyamine hardener. The hardener acts as a catalyst and is what gives epoxy its strength.

Unlike paint that has to dry, epoxy cures. When the two parts are mixed, a chemical reaction is started which creates an exothermic curing process. This curing process produces polymer structures that are closely cross-linked giving epoxy its superior strength and durability. The end result is a coating that is much thicker than paint and bonds tenaciously to a properly prepared surface.

BENEFITS OF A GARAGE FLOOR EPOXY COATING

So what makes an epoxy coating one of the best finishes for your garage floor? Besides looking nice, the hardened and thick application that you get from epoxy creates a coating that is very durable and resilient to

impacts, chipping, chemicals, stains, and surface abrasion. You don't have to panic about damaging the floor if you drop a wrench or a bicycle falls over.

The thicker coating also does a great job of covering over minor imperfections such as small spider cracks and flaws in the concrete. Because epoxy is a topical sealer, it is also anti-dusting. Much of the dust in a garage is created from the powder that a cement floor can shed. Normal traffic on bare concrete can kick up this dusty powder that has a tendency of collecting on cars, tool benches, and storage items, as well as being tracked into the house.

Flooring by Closet Organizing Systems

As a topical coating it is also naturally moisture resistant. This is a great benefit for people who live in snowy climates. It makes for **easy cleaning of icy brines and road salts** that can collect on the floor during the winter. Just a little mild soap and water is all it takes. Dust and debris can be collected with a dust mop or soft broom when the floor is dry.

Depending on whether you added **colored acrylic flakes** to the floor and the type of topcoat used, some surfaces can be slippery when wet. For people who live in drier climates this usually isn't an issue. If you want some extra grip however, you can **add slip resistant aggregat**e to the final coat that will create a non-skid surface.

Epoxy coatings receive high reviews from the home mechanics and hobbyists as well. Since it is both chemical and stain resistant, oil, brake fluids, anti-freeze, gasoline, and other caustic car chemicals can easily be wiped up without worry – even if it sits for a while. Rolling tool boxes, jacks, and jack stands will not damage the floor either. It also brightens up the garage environment because it is very light reflective depending on what type of finish you choose.

As tough as this type of garage floor covering is, it's not resistant to everything however. Welding is hard on epoxy because it can create burn marks from the hot slag that falls on it. It's also not a good choice for garage floors that have moisture issues. The rate of moisture vapor transmission from underneath the slab can cause epoxy to delaminate if it is too high.

Review the different coating options for epoxy floors

A common question that pops up about epoxy garage floors is **hot tire pick up**. This is caused when the hot tires from your car can soften lessor quality coatings. The tires then cool down and contract after driving which causes the tire tread to literally grab and pull at the surface of the still soft coating. This process will actually cause the epoxy to delaminate as the tire pulls it up off the floor.

This is a problem that is associated more with the lesser quality products such as store bought **epoxy paint kits**. These are usually **water based coatings** that are 50% solids at best and only 3 mils thick, as compared to 100% solids epoxy that is 10 mils or more thick. This is found in quality commercial product or professionally installed coatings.

Because the thicker, multiple coat epoxy floors wear so well, warranties of up to 15 years or more for installation by professional installers is becoming common. Many manufacturers of 100% solids epoxy warranty the product against defects for the life of the floor.

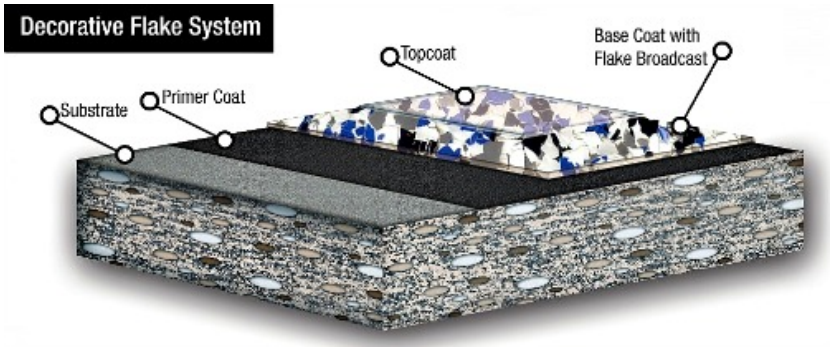
Visit our garage flooring gallery to view more epoxy coated garage floors.

HOW GARAGE FLOOR EPOXY IS APPLIED

Epoxy garage floors require good floor preparation which is critical for a successful coating. This usually involves some form of either floor grinding, shot blasting or acid etching of the floor to profile the concrete for the epoxy. It's very critical that it is done right or the epoxy coating will not adhere properly. Patching or **repairing any cracks or other damage to the concrete** before the epoxy is applied is required as well.

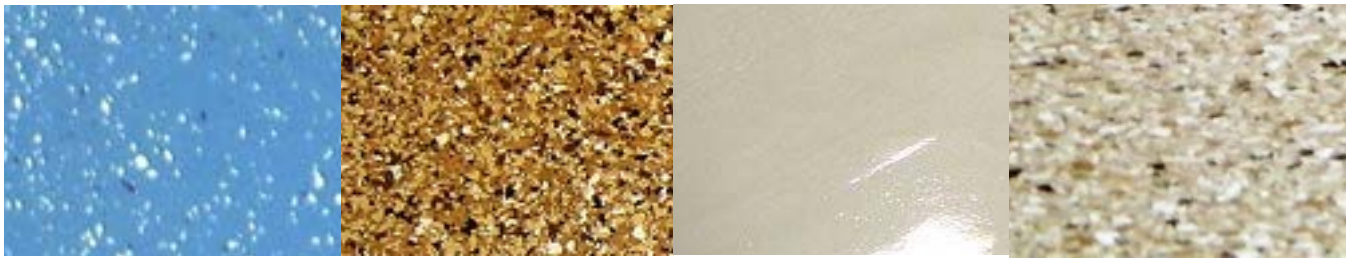
Quality epoxy floor systems usually involve multiple coats to insure a very tough and resistant coating that will last for years. Many times this will involve an epoxy primer which is applied first.

The primer is what binds to the concrete to provide adhesion for the subsequent layers and provide for a higher build. Some primers will also act as a moisture barrier for those cement floors that are somewhat susceptible to moisture vapor that moves up from the soil through the concrete to the surface.



The next coat is the color coat or base coat. This may sometimes be applied without primer depending on the manufacturer's recommendations. This coat will also receive the application of colored acrylic paint chips to add density and texture if so desired.

The final coat is the clear top coat. This is what gives the finish that glossy look and depth that these floors are known for.



Epoxy coated garage floors in various colors and paint chip applications

One option would be a system that includes a polyurethane top coat. Epoxy will yellow or amber, as the industry calls it, when exposed to sunlight over a period of time. Polyurethane is a two part polymer that hardens just like epoxy and is used as a sealer and protectant. When used in the color coat and top coat with epoxy, it will resist the yellowing effect that happens when exposed to sun.

GARAGE FLOOR EPOXY COSTS

The least expensive method to achieve a quality coating is to apply the garage floor epoxy yourself. This isn't too difficult for the ambitious "do it yourself" person. A quality single coat 100% solids epoxy kit that will cover a standard 2-car garage can be purchased for less than $300. This doesn't include any expense for floor prep or additional tools however. Expect to pay approximately $200 more if you want to add a clear top coat.

A professional installation usually starts around $4.00 a square foot. This usually includes a minimum of 3 coats and the cost goes up from there depending on the amount of top coats involved and how much color flake is applied in the base coat. A typical 2-car garage is approximately 400ft² to get an idea of cost.

Because of the curing time needed between epoxy coats, total time to complete the job and be able to park your car is approximately 4 to 5 days. There are now newer polyaspartic and polyurea floor coating systems that are fast curing that can be applied all in one day and driven on the next. Professional installation of these systems start around $6.00 a square foot. Because of their fast cure rate, they should not be applied by the average DIY person who is not confident in their abilities.

When reviewing the different epoxy options available, the best garage floor epoxy is going to be a 100% solids multi-coat system. Though it is the more expensive option for a floor covering, it is arguably one of the most economical of installations when compared over the duration of the floor.

Whether you are turning your garage into a show piece for storage and cars or just want something to protect your garage for years to come, a good system such as this will last years and give you one of the best returns for the dollar.

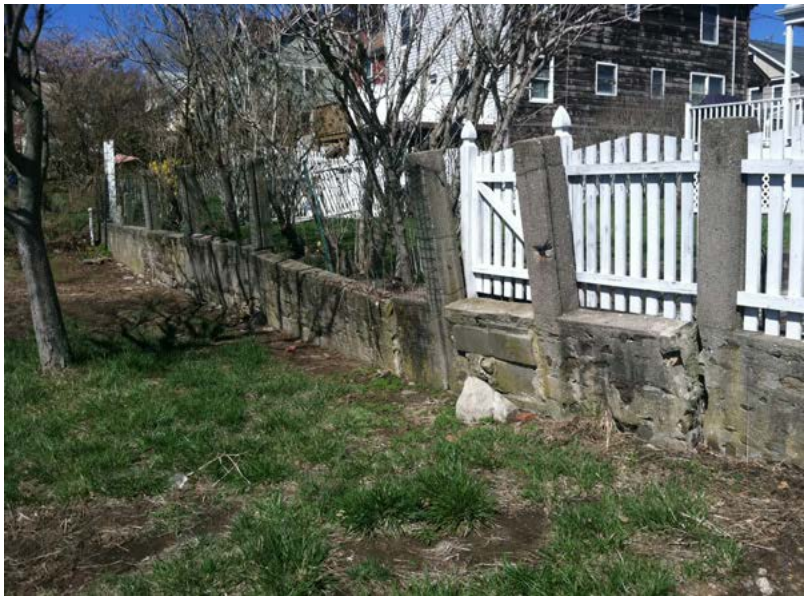
RELATED ARTICLES OTHERS HAVE READ:

- Cleaning and Maintenance Tips for Garage Floor Coatings
- Learn the Basics When Comparing Epoxy Coatings
- The Exotic Look of Metallic Epoxy Garage Floors
- Polyurethane versus Epoxy Coatings for Your Garage
- How to Choose the Best Epoxy Coat System for Your…

This is an article from The Larry Janesky Team that I found on line. He has provided us a lot of free but valuable classes over the years. I do not remember a specific class on retaining walls but found this from a google search.

Failing Retaining Walls in Connecticut and Westchester County, NY

How To Repair Crumbling Or Failing Retaining Walls



Around houses, **retaining walls** make sloping areas usable by creating level space for gardens, driveways, terraces, and walkways. Retaining walls are also common along roadways, parking lots, and bodies of water. They have many applications. Basement walls are also a type of retaining wall. We have a unique system for repairing failing basement walls.

The Problem:

Your retaining wall is showing signs of failure.

What is a Retaining Wall?

Retaining walls serve to retain the lateral pressure of soil. More simply, retaining walls are used to hold back soil and substrate from moving due to the effects of gravity and erosion. Retaining walls are typically designed out of concrete, stone, wood (including railroad ties), vinyl, masonry, steel, or brick.

Telltale Signs:

- Tilting walls
- Separation of retaining wall from adjoining walls
- Forward movement of wall or wall sections
- Buckling, cracked, or crumbling walls
- Rotted wood

How to Fix It:

We install either a wall anchor system or helical tieback system along the retaining wall to reinforce the structure.

Get a FREE Quote!

Schedule A Free Estimate

At **Connecticut Basement Systems,** we have warrantied solutions for failing retaining walls!
Call us for a free retaining wall repair quote today!

We serve Norwalk, Stamford, Yonkers, New Haven, Poughkeepsie, White Plains, Danbury, New Rochelle, Ossining, Greenwich and many nearby areas in Connecticut and New York.

Identifying Retaining Wall Failure

Signs of a failing retaining wall are usually easy to identify, as shown in the different examples below. The important thing to know is that these symptoms will become increasingly worse over time. Unless proper repairs are made, the wall will eventually fail completely.

Signs Of A Failing Retaining Wall

Most often, a retaining wall will show signs of failure in one of three ways:

Collapsing/Tilting Retaining Walls

Soil issues and/or poor construction are often the culprits for retaining walls that are tilting. This can happen if the footing toe is too small or if the wall wasn't properly reinforced. Railroad tie retaining walls can begin to collapse due to wood rot or deterioration.

Most retaining walls require drainage "weeps". If water accumulates behind the wall, this additional weight can cause clay soils to expand, leading to cracks and tilting.

Retaining Walls Separating From Adjacent Walls

Like collapsing/tilting retaining walls, walls that are separating from adjacent walls are often caused by poor quality construction.

A separating retaining wall may have not been designed to withstand the weight that actually bears on the wall. Poor drainage and inadequate reinforcement or connection to the adjacent wall are other possible causes. In unusual cases, expansive soils may also cause a retaining wall to separate from an adjoining wall.

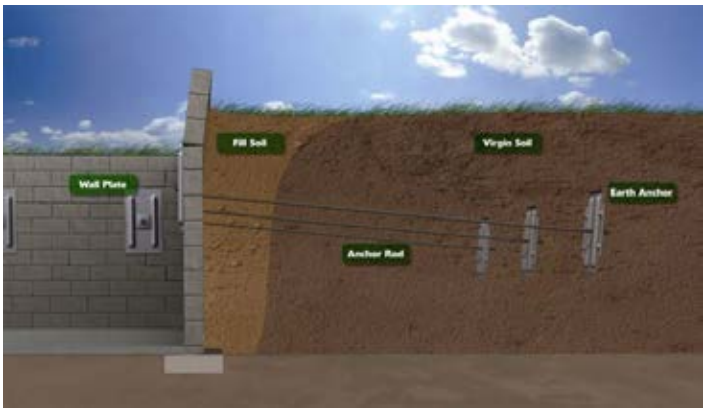
Crumbling/Failing Retaining Walls

Retaining walls can crumble for a wide variety of reasons, most related to improper design of the walls itself.

Often, the wall was not designed to bear the weight load behind it. In the case of concrete retaining walls, the issue may be inadequate, weak, or poorly mixed concrete.

Concrete retaining walls may also have been designed with inadequate steel rebar, resulting in insufficient strength.

Repairing Retaining Walls



A wall anchor system relies on the fixed position of an earth anchor and clamping pressure from an anchor rod.

A helical anchor system utilizes helix-shaped plates welded to the anchor shaft to pull the anchor deep into the soil

To repair retaining walls, we at Connecticut Basement Systems typically recommend either **wall anchors** or **helical tiebacks** to restore structural integrity.

Both wall repair techniques use a strong steel wall bracket on the exterior of the retaining wall to brace the wall distribute the anchor's clamping pressure.

With both wall anchors and helical tiebacks, your foundation repair contractor will also attempt to return the wall to its original position, restoring its appearance and structural integrity.

Wall anchors accomplish this by driving an anchor rod through 1" holes driven into the retaining wall. These rods are connected to earth anchors that are placed within augured holes within the soil beyond the retaining wall.

Once assembled, the wall plate is installed, and the rod assembly is tightened. This can potentially straighten the wall and return it to its original position.

Helical anchors are installed from the exposed face of the retaining wall, through a hole cut in the wall. The anchor's helical blades help to pull it deep into the soil and anchor it there. After closing the hole in the retaining wall, a wall plate is installed and a nut is tightened over the protruding threaded rod to brace the wall. Wall anchors are generally the more economical solution to repairing a retaining wall. However, in some cases, wall anchor installation is not a possibility, and helical anchor installation must be considered. This includes situations where rocky soil is an issue, or when space restrictions make auguring a hole beyond the retaining wall an impractical solution. Your foundation repair specialist will be able to advise you on the most appropriate solution for you.

What NOT To Do

Like other solutions for structural issues, you will encounter many options for repairing your retaining wall. Here are two "fixes" that we at Connecticut Basement Systems do NOT recommend:

Removing & Rebuilding The Retaining Wall:

Unless the retaining wall is showing extensive deterioration, removing and rebuilding the walls should not be necessary.

Removing and rebuilding a retaining wall is an expensive, time-consuming process typically involves heavy equipment, major excavation and the loss of valuable landscaping features.

Poor Quality Wall Anchors:

Retaining wall anchors are exposed to the elements -- both in the soil and on the wall plates themselves. If these anchors are poorly made or not treated to resist corrosion, they will quickly look old and unsightly. This will lower the property value possibly lead to early failure of the anchor.

We recommend installing wall anchors made with galvanized steel -- with a written warranty that stands by the product for decades to come.

We Repair Retaining Walls In CT and NY!

At **Connecticut Basement Systems**, we provide warrantied solutions for retaining wall repair throughout Connecticut and New York. For homeowners interested in learning more about their unique problem, we offer free, written retaining wall repair quotes at no obligation. To schedule an appointment with one of our specialists, call or e-mail us today!

We proudly serve Norwalk, Stamford, Yonkers areas such as Danbury, New Haven, Poughkeepsie, Greenwich, Ossining, New Rochelle, White Plains, and nearby.

Recent increase in mosquito activity has been reported on local news stations here in CT. Here is some information found on line.

Mosquitoes in Connecticut Test Positive for West Nile Virus

(Photo : Flickr)

New research suggests that children who had been given a single dose of Vitamin A are less likely to develop malaria.

The mosquitoes trapped on July 28 in Stamford's Cove Island Park have tested positive for West Nile virus (WNV), announced the Stamford State Mosquito Management Program, as reported by Stamford Patch.

The state now plans to apply larvicide to all catch basins throughout the city.

"It is important that residents take precautions to avoid contact with mosquitoes. We know that mosquitoes are most active at dawn and dusk," Anne Fountain, Stamford's director of Health and Social Services, told Patch. "Simple measures including wearing long pants, long-sleeved shirts, head coverings and socks will minimize exposure to mosquitoes, which may carry the virus.

"The use of insect repellant is also helpful. In addition, we urge people to seek out and empty standing water in and around their homes. We will begin to larvicide all catch basins throughout the city next week with an additional treatment in September."

These are the third positive mosquitoes identified in the State of Connecticut by the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) this year. The other two were identified at Guilford and New Haven.

Mosquito Transmitted Diseases

It has been known for over a century that certain mosquitoes can harbor and transmit the microorganisms that cause diseases. These disease pathogens are often viruses which are contracted or "picked up" by the mosquito when it bites (feeds on) an infected host including domestic or wild animals or people. The virus develops and multiplies inside the mosquito. The infected mosquito then transmits the virus through its saliva when it bites another, uninfected host. By passing on the virus, the mosquito acts as a "vector" of the disease.

Yellow fever, WNV and EEE are some examples of mosquito-borne diseases or "arboviruses" (arthropod-borne viruses). Although these viruses have probably been around for centuries, only within the past 100 years has it been determined that they were spread by mosquitoes. Mainly because of organized mosquito control efforts, better sanitation and vaccines, many of these diseases are kept in check and not usually thought of in today's modern society.

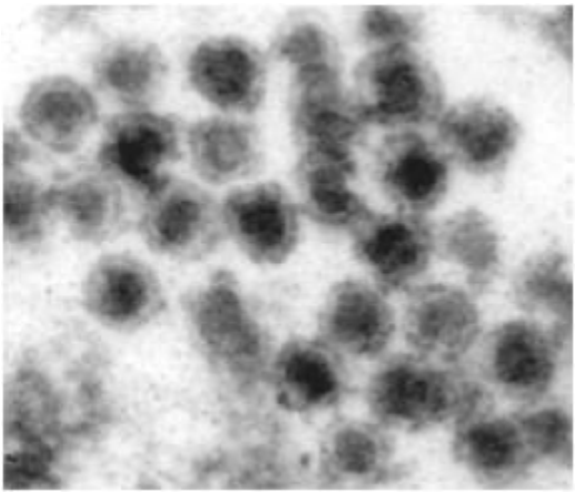
However, the diseases are still prevalent in some parts of the world. For example, malaria, another mosquito-borne disease, kills 2.7 million people each year and infects 300 to 500 million others. The vast majority of the mosquito-borne diseases occur in Africa and the tropics of southeast Asia and South America.

There are 9 arboviruses that have been isolated from mosquitoes collected in Connecticut among which 6 are known to cause human disease.

Arboviruses isolated from mosquitoes in Connecticut

Virus	Natural Reservoir	Age Group Most Affected	Human Disease
West Nile	Bird	Elderly	Moderate to severe, fever, encephalitis
Eastern Equine Encephalitis	Bird	Children	Severe, encephalitis
La Crosse	Squirrel, chipmunk	Children	Severe, encephalitis
Jamestown Canyon	White-tailed deer	Young adults	Mild, flu-like
Cache Valley	Deer, horse, sheep	All ages	Febrile illness, fever
Trivittatus	Rabbit, squirrel, raccoon, opossum	All ages	Febrile illness, fever
Highlands J	Bird	-	None reported
Potosi	White-tailed deer	-	None reported
Flanders	Bird	-	None reported

West Nile Virus (WNV) - *Frequently Asked Questions*



West Nile virus can cause infection in animals and people. The virus is similar to the St. Louis encephalitis virus and produces similar symptoms. Like EEE, WNV is spread to humans by the bite of infected mosquitoes. A mosquito is infected when it bites a bird that is carrying the virus. The virus is not spread from person to person or directly from birds to people under normal circumstances.

Anyone can become infected with WNV. Most people who are infected with the virus will have no symptoms (80%) or may experience mild illness (20%), before fully recovering. However, a small portion of people (1%), particularly the elderly or persons with compromised immune systems, become seriously ill when infected. In some individuals, the virus affects the central nervous system - the brain and spinal cord. At its most serious, it can cause permanent neurological damage and can be fatal. Onset of symptoms generally occurs 3 to 14 days following the bite of an infected mosquito. Symptoms may range from a slight fever, headache, body aches, rash, nausea and swollen lymph nodes to the rapid onset of severe

headache, high fever, stiff neck, disorientation, muscle weakness, coma and, rarely, death. There is no vaccine, or cure for WNV or St. Louis encephalitis though treatment can reduce the severity of the symptoms.

The chance of getting sick from the WNV is very small. In areas where mosquitoes carry the virus, only about one out of 500 mosquitoes are infected. Furthermore, if bitten by an infected mosquito, the chance of a person developing the illness are roughly one in 300. Therefore, the chance of being bitten by an infected mosquito and developing disease symptoms from that bite is very small. This does not mean, however, that people should be complacent. The best way for people to protect themselves in areas where mosquito-borne viruses are present is to take personal protective measures to prevent mosquito bites.

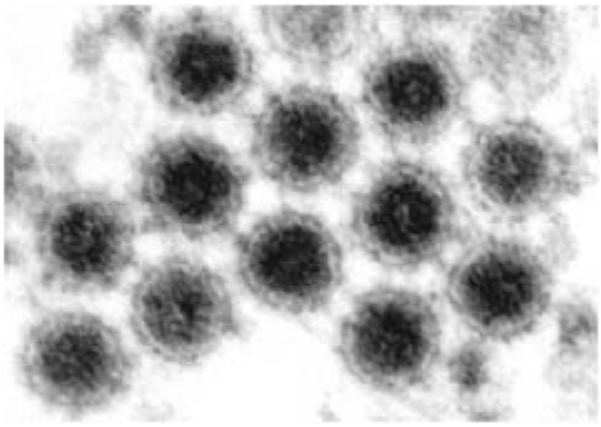
WNV has been isolated from 18 different species of mosquitoes in Connecticut, but 5 species have been implicated as the most important vectors: Culex pipiens, Culex restuans, Culex salinarius, Culiseta melanura and Aedes vexans. Cx. pipiens, Cx. restuans and Cs. melanura principally feed on birds and are largely involved in perpetuating the virus among wild bird populations in nature, while Cx. salinarius and Ae. vexans readily feed on mammals including humans and are believed to be involved in transmission of WNV to horses and humans. Cx. pipiens, a peridomestic species that develops in water with high organic content and is particularly abundant in urban centers, is the most frequently infected mosquito species in the state.

Although WNV has been detected throughout the State of Connecticut, the large majority of infected mosquitoes and human cases have occurred in densely populated urban and suburban communities in lower Fairfield and New Haven Counties and the greater Hartford area which have been identified as regions of the State where the risk of becoming infected is greatest.

The WNV season in Connecticut extends from July through early October but the greatest risk of human infection occurs from August through September.

Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) - *Frequently Asked Questions*

Eastern equine encephalitis is a rare but serious disease caused by a virus that is spread by adult mosquitoes. On average there are 5 cases each year in the United States. There has never been a documented human case of EEE in Connecticut, but the virus is found in birds and bird-biting mosquitoes that live near wetland habitats along the eastern seaboard from New England to Florida. In some years, high numbers of birds get infected favoring spread to the types of mosquitoes that bite both mammals and birds. These mosquitoes can then infect people and horses. EEE is not spread by people and horses with the disease. The risk of getting EEE is highest from late July through September.



The virus responsible for EEE attacks the central nervous system of its host. Horses are particularly susceptible to the infection and mortality rates approach 100%. Onset is abrupt and horse cases are almost always fatal. Signs of the disease in horses include unsteadiness, erratic behavior, loss of coordination and seizures. There is no effective treatment and death can occur within 48 to 72 hours of the horse's first indications of illness. Horses can and should be inoculated against this disease especially in areas where EEE is known to circulate.

In humans, symptoms of EEE appear from three to 10 days after being bitten by an infected mosquito. Some infected people may not develop illness. For those who become ill, the clinical symptoms may include high fever (103 to 106 degrees F), stiff neck, headache and lack of energy. Inflammation of the brain, encephalitis, is the most dangerous. The disease gets worse quickly and some patients go into a coma within a week. Once symptoms develop, treatment for EEE is supportive and aimed at reducing the severity of the symptoms. As

many as one-third of people who get the disease die from it and of those who survive approximately one-half will have permanent neurologic damage. Presently, there is no available vaccine for use in humans.

Mosquitos are hungry this time of year – here are six ways to avoid their bites

These quick and easy tips help you to prevent the pesky blood-sucking insects from making a meal out of you.

Those mosquito bites you got at last night's barbeque? They're not entirely random. Mosquitoes are attracted to a variety of chemical compounds, meaning your body type, activity level and even what you're drinking have an effect on whether or not you'll end the day with zero bites or five.

Besides carbon dioxide (CO2), which they can detect from more than 50 feet away, mosquitos are more attracted to active people because they release a greater amount of chemical signals through their perspiration than sedentary people do. Larger people also put out more of these signals, making them easier targets. Other major draws include body heat – heat sensors in mosquitoes' mouths help them track sources of warm blood – and the odor of lactic acid excreted through skin. Additionally, recent research suggests the insects may prefer those who've had a couple of beers.

Since you're not going to stop breathing out CO2, read on for six ways to deter mosquitoes from eating you for dinner.

1. Use Deet

The most effective mosquito repellents include those with diethyltoluamide, commonly known as Deet, according to the US Centers for Disease Control. Spray repellents come with varying Deet percentages; longer-lasting ones contain more of it. Sprays with picaridin and oil of lemon eucalyptus are also recommended. Pregnant women and young children should consult a doctor before using these repellants, and babies younger than three months should not be treated, according to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control; those infants should instead be protected by netting when possible.

2. Beware plant-based protection

Some people will insist on taking a more natural route when attempting to ward off mosquitoes. But most plant-based protectors are less effective than the recommended Deet sprays – if at all. The Environmental Working Group, the clearinghouse for information on potentially toxic products, warns that these products, which typically don't undergo any regulatory testing for effectiveness or safety, may contain highly concentrated allergens. "Consumers have no assurance that the product actually works," the EWG wrote in a recent paper on repellants. The organization recommends "oil of lemon eucalyptus/PMD, which has been registered with the EPA and undergone efficacy testing". PMD refers to p-menthane-3,8-diol, or menthoglycol, found in eucalyptus essential oil.

3. Loosen up

While sprays, oils and candles get a lot of attention on grocery aisle shelves, one simple thing you can do to avoid bites is to wear loose-fitting, long-sleeved shirts and pants. Light colors are also advised, as darker clothes soak up and retain more heat. Socks under sandals may be a fashion faux pas, but given mosquitoes' special fondness for those with sweaty feet, we'd recommend going all out on this one. And wrap a bandana around that exposed neck.

4. Patrol puddles

Female mosquitoes need standing water to deposit their eggs – up to 250 of them at a time. It doesn't take much: neglected dog bowls, small puddles or water collected by old tires can serve as breeding grounds for

larvae that can transition to a buzzing menace in as little as one week. You'll need the help of your neighbors to make this work, but make no mistake – standing water is enemy No 1. For features you intend to keep for wildlife or the pleasure of hearing water tinkling in your garden, buy mosquito "dunks" containing a natural insecticide that is safe for fish, wildlife and humans but fatal to mosquitoes. Or buy some mosquito fish from your local aquarium to gobble up the larvae.

5. Watch out for bug zappers

That glowing ultraviolet light from your bug zapper may look cool and the crackling sounds may even convince you it's keeping you safe. Unfortunately, all those marketing promises may not deliver. These electrical devices actually lure far more beneficial insects than mosquitoes. One study found that only 0.2% of insects killed by the devices were biting insects. Nearly half were nonbiting aquatic insects and 13.5% were insect predators. Worse, bug zappers may even draw mosquitoes from surrounding areas – and they can turn and seek out the source of that alluring CO2 you're breathing out.

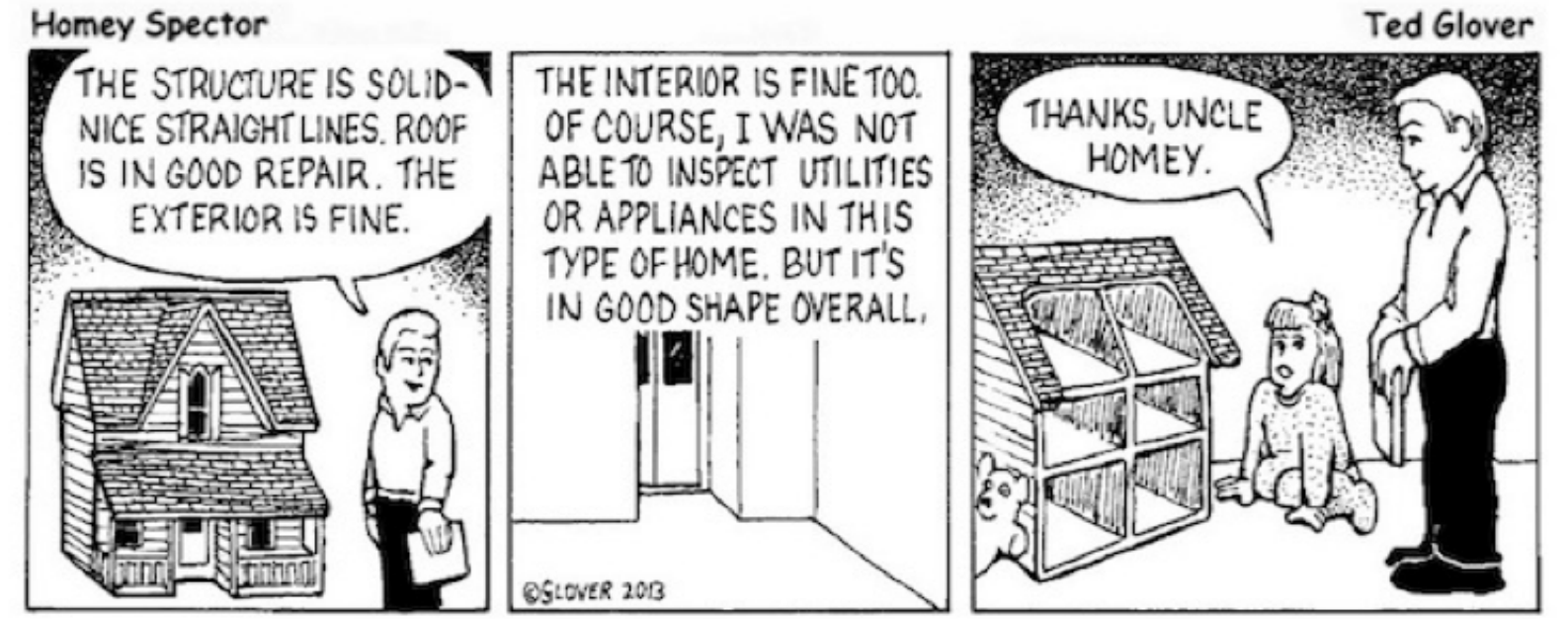
6. Bed nets

While mosquitoes that feed during the day may be becoming more common, most feed during dawn and dusk. While you may want to avoid being outside during these times, it's not practical for most people. At bedtime, however, bed nets can help keep mosquitoes away. In epidemic-prone regions, nets treated with insecticides have proven effective at preventing disease. The World Health Organization recommends that everyone living in areas with high incidences of malaria use long-lasting insecticide-treated bed nets.

CARTOONS

By Ted Glover


HOMEY SPECTOR
TED GLOVER
THIS DEAD TREE SHOULD BE TAKEN DOWN BEFORE IT FALLS ON THE HOME.
GOSH WILLOW, WHATTYA THINK?
GEE PRAIRIE, YOU KNOW WE DON'T BELIEVE IN CUTTING DOWN TREES.
I THINK MOTHER NATURE WILL LET US KNOW WHEN IT'S TIME FOR THE TREE TO COME DOWN.
©GLOVER 2006


Homey Spector
Ted Glover
THE STRUCTURE IS SOLID- NICE STRAIGHT LINES. ROOF IS IN GOOD REPAIR. THE EXTERIOR IS FINE.
THE INTERIOR IS FINE TOO. OF COURSE, I WAS NOT ABLE TO INSPECT UTILITIES OR APPLIANCES IN THIS TYPE OF HOME. BUT IT'S IN GOOD SHAPE OVERALL.
©GLOVER 2013
THANKS, UNCLE HOMEY.


Homey Spector
Ted Glover
HOMEY, REMEMBER THE WELL AND SEPTIC INSPECTION FROM CHERRYPIT LANE?
SURE, GARY.
CAN YOU RE-DO THE REPORT TO LEAVE OUT THE SEPTIC PART?
WHY?
THE NEW BUYER DOESN'T WANT A SEPTIC INSPECTION.
YOU DO REMEMBER THAT THE SYSTEM NEEDS REPLACING.
©GLOVER 2013
WELL YEAH. BUT HE JUST ASKED FOR THE WELL INSPECTION. SO CAN YOU RE-DO THE REPORT?
NO.
& NO MORE WORK FROM GARY

Contact CAHI c/o

Scott Monforte
39 Baker St.
Milford, CT. 06461

Email: info@ctinspectors.com

Web: www.ctinspectors.com

Articles published in CAHI Monthly are the sole opinion of the author. CAHI does not endorse or state a position for or against the content of said articles.

CAHI Executive Board		CAHI Presidents	CT Home Inspection Licensing Board	
President	Stanley Bajerski 203-257-1694	Bernie Caliendo	William Stanley, Chairman	Inspector
Vice President	Scott Monforte 203-877-4774	Robert Dattilo	Rich Kobylenski	Inspector
Treasurer	Dan Kristiansen 203-257-0912	Woody Dawson	Larry Willette	Inspector
Secretary	Dean Aliberti 202-414-8336	Michael DeLugan	Bruce Schaefer	Inspector
Director	William Kievit 860-919-4960	David Hetzel	David Sherwood	Inspector
Director	Kevin Morey 203-375-5997	Richard Kobylenski	Eric Curtis	Public Member
Director	Woody Dawson 203-272-7400	Scott Monforte	James J. O'Neill	Public Member
Director	Al Dingfelder 203-376-8452	Joseph Pelliccio	Daniel Scott	Public Member
		Pete Petrino		
		Dwight Uffer		
		They have served as our primary leaders and in other capacities since 1992. Please thank them for their service when you have a chance.		

The Licensing Board meetings are held at 9:30 am
Dept of Consumer Protection
165 Capitol Avenue. Hartford

The public is always welcome.

Published by: Larry Ruddy
Larryhp@cox.net