

Acoustic Ceilings May Contain Asbestos Maintenance Magic

Here is some a maintenance magic that has been conjured up by some do-it-yourselfers. Try it out.

Acoustic ceilings are fairly commonplace in apartments. When you consider remodeling the unit or if there are substantial repairs to be made and the acoustic ceiling will be disturbed or removed, some people forget they are required to test the ceiling material for asbestos.

If the property was built in the 1950s up to the 1970s, it is very likely that the acoustic ceilings contain asbestos. Generally speaking, if the material is not disturbed, then it is not considered a serious health hazard.

But if demolition or removal occurs, you are required by law to have the material tested. If it contains asbestos, then it must be removed and disposed by a licensed abatement contractor.

If you fail to comply with this requirement, you and your contractor may leave yourself open to potential liability, particularly since you are exposing yourselves and others to possible health hazards relating to exposure from airborne asbestos particles.

For example, if the asbestos-containing material is not properly removed, asbestos particles and fibers may find their way into fabric throughout the property including carpeting, upholstered furniture, clothing and draperies contaminating these items.

This can lead to harmful exposure to you, contractors, tenants and subsequent purchasers. You and others may be financially liable for exposing others to the asbestos, plus the cost of abating the problem, which could include having to properly remove and replace all carpets, furnishing, clothing, etc., contaminated by asbestos.

(Reprinted from the Apartment Association, Greater Los Angeles, April 2001 Issue)