



Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
Intramuros, Manila

Department Order No. 154
Series of 2016



**SAFETY AND HEALTH STANDARDS ON THE USE AND MANAGEMENT OF
ASBESTOS IN THE WORKPLACE**

Pursuant to Article 162 of the Labor Code of the Philippines, as amended, Rule 1071.03 of the Occupational Safety and Health Standards (OSHS), DOLE Department Order No. 136-14¹ and Presidential Decree No. 626,² as amended, DENR Administrative Order 2000-02³ (CCO for Asbestos) and DAO 13-22,⁴ the following guidelines are hereby issued:

Section 1. Scope and Coverage. - The scope and coverage of this promulgation include all activities which expose the workers to asbestos in the workplace. This shall also apply to asbestos-related activities, such as construction, manufacturing, dismantling, disposal and other industrial activities that have asbestos or asbestos-containing products.

Section 2. Definition of Terms. - The following terms as used in this Rules shall mean:

- a. **“Asbestos”** means the fibrous form of mineral silicates belonging to the serpentine and amphibole groups of rock-forming minerals, including actinolite, amosite (brown asbestos), anthophyllite, chrysotile (white asbestos), crocidolite (blue asbestos), tremolite, or any mixture containing one or more of the mineral silicates belonging to the serpentine and amphibole groups.
- b. **“Asbestos-Containing Material (ACM)”** means any material, object, product or debris that contains asbestos.
- c. **“Asbestos-containing product”** means any product or part thereof to which asbestos is deliberately or knowingly added or used in any concentration.
- d. **“Asbestos-Containing Waste”** means processed residues from manufacturing operations and customer discards of manufactured products.

¹ Guidelines for Implementation of Globally Harmonized System (GHS) in Chemical Safety Program in the Workplace

² Employees' Compensation and State Insurance Funds, 2011 Edition.

³ Chemical Control for Asbestos pertaining to the importation, manufacture and use of asbestos and the storage, transport and disposal of their wastes

⁴ Revised Procedures and Standards for the Management of Hazardous Wastes, revising DAO 2004-36 of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

- e. **“Asbestos Related Diseases (ARD)”** means a disease caused by the inhalation of asbestos fibers.
- f. **“Threshold Limit Value (TLV)”** refers to airborne concentrations of chemical substances and represents conditions under which it is believed that nearly all workers may be repeatedly exposed, day after day, over a working lifetime, without adverse effects (OSHS, DOLE). It also refers to the limits on substances set by the DOLE.
- g. **“Wet Methods”** is the process where asbestos shall be handled, mixed, applied, removed, cut, scored or otherwise worked in a wet state sufficient to prevent the emission of airborne fibers so as not to expose workers to levels in excess of the TWA, unless the usefulness of the product would be diminished thereby. (OSHA)

Section 3. Asbestos Safety and Health Program. - The employer shall ensure the development and implementation of an asbestos safety and health program (ASHP) for the workers in compliance with Rule 1045 of Occupational Safety and Health Standards (OSHS) and Annex “A”: Occupational Diseases of the Implementing Rules of PD 626 as amended. The ASHP shall include the following:

A. Hazard Identification/ Risk Assessment and Control

- 1) Use of alternative or replacement materials for asbestos when feasible
- 2) Control the exposure of workers to asbestos through any of but not limited to the use of the following:
 - a) Proper enclosure or isolation of workarea
 - b) Efficient local exhaust ventilation system and negative pressure ventilation
 - c) HEPA vacuum cleaners and wet methods during asbestos clean-up
 - d) Wet methods
- 3) Observe safe work practices such as establishment of a regulated area where:
 - a) Access must be limited to trained and authorized personnel.
 - b) Entry and exit must be through a decontamination unit consisting of a connected equipment room, shower room, and clean room.
 - c) Warning signs on asbestos should be displayed in conspicuous places in accordance with the OSHS.
- 4) Provide appropriate respiratory protection and whole body protective clothing, including head coverings, gloves, goggles and foot coverings for all workers handling asbestos in accordance with Rule 1080 of OSHS.
- 5) Conduct work environment measurement as provided in Rule 1070 of OSHS.
- 6) Designate an accredited and competent safety officer trained on the safe management of asbestos, to carry out the implementation of the asbestos safety program.
- 7) Implement a “smoke-free” workplace policy and program.

- 8) Provide proper labeling of asbestos-containing materials (ACM) or products as stipulated in DO 136-14, DOLE and DAO 2000-02, Chemical Control Order (CCO) for Asbestos, DENR.
- 9) Keep an updated asbestos inventory to determine the presence, location and quantity of asbestos at the work site.
- 10) Dispose asbestos-containing wastes properly as provided in DAO 2013-22.

B. Information, Education and Training

- 1) Information and training of workers on the safe use of chrysotile asbestos and ACM among workers, contractors and others who may come in contact with ACM in the workplace either directly or indirectly.
- 2) Training of workers on proper methods and procedures of dismantling ACM as provided in DAO 2000-02, CCO for Asbestos, DAO 2013-22, DENR.
- 3) Training of safety officers on recognition, evaluation and control of chrysotile asbestos and ACM.
- 4) Training of the company's occupational health personnel on the prevention, diagnosis and rehabilitation of asbestos-related diseases (ARD) by the Occupational Safety and Health Center (OSHC), Department of Health (DOH), Lung Center of the Philippines (LCP), Employees Compensation Commission (ECC) and other training institutions capable of providing training on asbestos and asbestos-related concerns.

C. Access to Occupational Health/Medical Services (Diagnosis and Treatment)

- 1) Pre-employment medical examination as provided in Rule 1967.01 of OSHS and Rule III, Section 2 (b) of the Implementing Rules of PD 626 as amended.
The following tests should be used and interpreted according to standardized procedures and evaluation criteria:
 - a) History of exposure
 - b) Pertinent medical history
 - c) Standardized respiratory disease questionnaire (Annex 1)
 - d) Pulmonary (lung) function tests and chest x-rays.
- 2) Periodic Annual medical examination as provided in Rule 1967.03 of OSHS and Rule III, Section 2 (b) of the Implementing Rules of PD 626 as amended.
This shall be conducted free of charge to the workers, in order to follow-up previous finding, to allow early detection of occupational and non-occupational diseases, and determine the effect of exposure of workers to health hazards.
- 3) Medical Surveillance Program in accordance to Rule 1967.01 of OSHS and Rule III, Section 2 (b) of the Implementing Rules of PD 626 as amended.
 - a) Workers with potential exposure to asbestos should be monitored in a systematic program of medical surveillance intended to prevent or control occupational

disease which include systematic collection and epidemiologic analyses of relevant environmental and biologic monitoring, medical screening and morbidity and mortality data.

- b) All medical records of the workers shall be made available to government agencies such as DOLE and DOH. The medical records shall be kept for a minimum of 20 years. The competent authority must ensure the confidentiality of the worker's medical data in accordance with national laws, regulations, conditions and practice.
- c) A worker leaving the employment of the company shall be examined by the occupational health physician to determine if the worker is suffering from any occupational disease or illness which has not completely healed and any injury he has sustained as provided in Rule 1967.09 of OSHS. The said examinations should be the same as the pre-employment and periodic medical examinations.
- d) The medical examinations and procedures must be conducted by, or under the supervision of, a licensed Occupational Health physician/pulmonologist. The attending physician shall report any significant findings to the Chief Operations Officer/Manager as part of the work accident/illness report.
- e) The medical examinations must be conducted at no cost to the worker, and at a reasonable time and place.
- f) Access to treatment will be provided by the company based on the PhilHealth and ECC benefits. The DOH may refer the patients to the Lung Center of the Philippines, for further medical evaluation, as may be necessary.

D. Medical examination shall be provided by the employer upon retirement or transfer of employee to another non-asbestos company without prejudice to PhilHealth, SSS and ECC benefits.

E. Post-retirement medical monitoring shall be facilitated by the ECC and OSHC.

F. Reportorial Requirement

In accordance with Annex "A": Occupational Diseases of the Implementing Rules of PD 626 as amended, the employer shall:

- a) Provide the Bureau of Working Conditions and DOLE Regional Offices with an annual report regarding the status of workers diagnosed with ARD-in addition to the reportorial requirements of the OSHS.
- b) Provide full support to the worker deserving of compensation and rehabilitation benefits.
- c) Provide data such as work environment measurement reports on health hazards and other information that may be deemed necessary by the SSS, GSIS or ECC in the determination of causal relationship of the worker's exposure with the disability or death.

G. Compensation/Rehabilitation

All workers diagnosed with work related illness due to exposure to asbestos in his workplace shall be compensated in accordance to Board Resolution No. 12-09-18, Amending the Conditions for Compensations of Pneumonia, Bronchial Asthma, Pneumoconiosis and Asbestosis and other Pulmonary Conditions of Annex A of the Amended Rules on Employees Compensation.

The worker shall perform his/her job based on prescribed safety practices and standards and endeavor to report unsafe conditions and practices in compliance with Rule 1046 of the Occupational Safety and Health Standards (OSHS). Specifically, workers shall:

- a) Cooperate with the employer in the implementation of OSH policy and program;
- b) Comply with prescribed safety and hygiene procedures relating to the prevention and control of, and protection against the health hazards of exposure to asbestos.

Section 4. Occupational Exposure Limits.- DOLE Memorandum Circular No. 02 S. 1998, classified the manufacture or handling of asbestos and other similar products as hazardous processes. Workers shall have as close to zero occupational exposure limits as reasonably practicable but in no case shall exceed the TLV for asbestos of 0.1 fiber per cubic centimeter of air in an 8-hour work period.

Section 5. Monitoring Compliance. - The Bureau of Working Conditions (BWC) through the DOLE Regional Offices shall monitor compliance to the Guidelines, pertinent provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Standards (OSHS) and other related laws and policies through the Labor Laws Compliance System.

As provided in Rule 1013 of OSHS and DOLE MC No. 02 series of 1998 otherwise known as "Guidelines for Classifying Hazardous and Non-Hazardous Workplaces", establishments using hazardous chemicals such as asbestos are considered highly hazardous, and as such are priority establishments for joint assessment.

The Safety and Health Committee of the establishment shall implement and monitor its Asbestos Safety Program.

Section 6. Periodic Review.- The DOLE shall periodically review or update these Guidelines as frequent as necessary. As chair of the Occupational Health Sector of the Interagency Committee on Environmental Health (IACEH), the DOLE shall oversee the regular use of these Guidelines.

Section 7. Repealing Clause. - All other laws, orders, issuances, rules and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with any provisions of these Guidelines are hereby repealed, amended, or modified accordingly.

Section 8. Penalties. - All violations of the provisions of these Guidelines shall be subjected to the applicable penalties provided for in the Labor Code of the Philippines, as amended, and PD 626 as amended, as well as other related laws.

Section 9. Transitory Provisions. - All establishments manufacturing asbestos-containing materials (ACM) and those engaged in the demolition of ACM shall be required to comply with all the requirements of these Guidelines within six (6) months from effectivity hereof.

All workers who may be rendered jobless due to violations of these Guidelines by companies using asbestos shall be assisted by DOLE through provision of job assistance, retraining and livelihood opportunities to ease the burden of displacement.

Section 10. Effectivity. - This Department Order shall take effect within fifteen (15) days from the date of its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Manila, Philippines, 21 APR 2016.


ROSALINDA DIMAPILIS BALDOZ
Secretary

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