



# Concerned about Mesothelioma? Our North Carolina Asbestos Lawyer Explains the Risks of Exposure

The widespread use of asbestos during the 20th century has put millions at risk of asbestos-related illnesses, with hundreds of thousands of U.S. families already affected. While a Martin & Jones North Carolina asbestos lawyer can help you determine where and how your exposure occurred, the following describes some common asbestos uses in the United States.

# How Do People Become Exposed to Asbestos?

If you worked in any of these industries – particularly if you are a union member or a veteran – and have come down with an asbestos-related illness, contact a Martin & Jones North Carolina asbestos lawyer right away.

## Construction Industry Asbestos Exposure

Workers in the construction industry are at particular risk of asbestos-related illness as the material was used in a large number of construction-related products. The following are just some of the types of construction workers who have been put at risk:

- Bricklayers
- Carpenters
- Electricians
- Demolition workers
- Drywall hangers
- Pipefitters
- Plasterers
- Plumbers
- Masonry workers
- Roofers
- Tile setters
- HVAC workers

## Mesothelioma Risks for the Power Plant Industry

Asbestos products were commonly used in [power plants](#) throughout the United States. Boilers, turbines, steam pipes, tanks, and generators commonly used in coal-fired plants, steam plants, hydro-electric plants and nuclear power plants were frequently insulated with asbestos-containing products like pipe covering, block insulation, gaskets and refractory cement.

## Steel Industry Asbestos Exposure

Manufacturing steel requires intense heat. As a result, asbestos was the preferred heat-shielding agent of the steel industry for decades. Not only was it used to shield heat in steel factory fixtures and machinery, but it was infused into the protecting gloves, aprons and leggings that steelworkers were required to wear.

## Shipyard Industry Asbestos Exposure

Anyone who worked at a shipyard in the 20th century was put at significant risk of asbestos exposure. Asbestos is not used in manufacturing ships today, but it still exists on many ships that end up in shipyards for maintenance and repairs. If you ever worked in a shipyard, you may have been exposed to asbestos. A Martin & Jones North Carolina asbestos lawyer can assist you in determining your risks and your rights. [Review our list of known asbestos exposure shipyards in the United States.](#)

## Asbestos Risks in the Automotive Industry

Workers in auto garages, car dealerships and other confined workspaces often spend years working with clutch facings, brake shoes, linings and other asbestos-containing friction materials.

## Families of Workers Exposed to Asbestos

Even if you never worked in any of these professions, if you had a family member who did, you may have been exposed to asbestos. Often, workers would return home carrying asbestos fibers on their clothing and skin, which put their families at risk of developing mesothelioma years or even decades later. Workers were usually not warned of the hazards of asbestos, so they had no reason to know of the risks to their families.

## Lung Cancer from Asbestos Exposures

A North Carolina asbestos lawyer at Martin & Jones will consult with medical experts to determine whether a particular case of lung cancer was caused or contributed to by exposure to asbestos.

## Types Of Lung Cancer Associated With Asbestos Exposure

Asbestos exposure has been proven to cause the [following types of lung cancer](#):

- **Small cell** – Small cell lung cancer is an aggressive, rapidly growing form of cancer commonly associated with smoking, but studies have shown it is also caused by asbestos exposure.

- **Large cell** – Large cell carcinoma of the lung is another rapidly growing form of cancer.
- **Adenocarcinoma** – Adenocarcinoma starts in mucus-producing cells in the lungs, which line the alveoli. It is the most common form of lung cancer.
- **Squamous cell** – Squamous cell cancer gets its name from where the cancer starts: in the squamous cells of the lung, which line the airway.

For workers who were exposed to asbestos, the risk of lung cancer increases with the number of asbestos fibers inhaled. The risk of lung cancer from exposure to asbestos is also greatly increased if the worker is or was a cigarette smoker.

## Our North Carolina Asbestos Attorneys Help You Pursue Claims for Other Cancers Caused By Exposure

A strong causal link between asbestos exposure and these types of cancers warrant investigation. If you have been diagnosed with any of these types of cancer and have reason to believe you were exposed to asbestos, contact our North Carolina asbestos attorneys to explore your options.

- **Ovarian cancer.** Asbestos fibers have repeatedly been found in the ovaries of women who were exposed to asbestos. Researchers believe the fibers may reach the organs via the bloodstream, lymph system or reproductive tract. The use of talc products has also been shown to cause ovarian cancer.
- **Laryngeal cancer.** While smoking and heavy alcohol use are the most important risk factors for laryngeal cancer, the link to asbestos exposure has been proven.
- **Esophageal cancer.** Like laryngeal cancer, smoking and alcohol use increase the risk for esophageal cancer, but asbestos exposure in the workplace is also considered a cause.
- **Colorectal cancer.** Medical research suggests there is a risk of developing colon cancer as a result of asbestos exposure.

At Martin & Jones, our asbestos lawyers are committed to obtaining compensation for people who have been diagnosed with asbestos-related lung cancer. Our attorneys have successfully represented clients in various types of claims, including workers' compensation claims and bankruptcy claims.

## What is Asbestos?

Contrary to what many people think, asbestos is a naturally occurring group of minerals composed of chrysotile, amosite, and crocidolite. Asbestos fibers are very strong yet flexible, which makes them naturally resistant to heat,

electricity, corrosion, and sound. Because of these properties, it was used for decades as an insulator in a wide variety of industrial and consumer products.

## Non-Industrial Exposures to Asbestos

People can be exposed to asbestos in a number of ways beyond industrial settings. For example:

- **Military personnel.** The military routinely used asbestos products in equipment and housing until the 1970s, and as a result, many veterans had long-term exposure to asbestos.
- **At-home exposure.** Many older homes were built using products that contained asbestos such as flooring, roofing materials, siding, and joint compound in sheetrock. When these materials become damaged, they can release asbestos into the air that can be inhaled by the people who live there. This can result in long-term exposure that can lead to asbestos-related illnesses.
- **Products that contain asbestos.** In some instances, it has been found as a contaminant in consumer products that were thought to be otherwise safe, such as [Johnson & Johnson baby powder](#). For people who use these products on a regular basis, this can lead to asbestos-related illnesses.

Industrial cases can be easier to prove because the worker can clearly document their long-term exposure to asbestos. If you are suffering from an asbestos-related illness due to non-industrial exposure, a North Carolina asbestos lawyer can evaluate your potential claim.

## You May Be Entitled to Compensation from One of the Multiple Sources

Because it has been proven that asbestos causes various types of cancers and illnesses, claimants have options when it comes to pursuing a claim for compensation. These sources include the following:

- **Asbestos bankruptcy trust funds.** Many of the companies whose workers were exposed to asbestos have filed for bankruptcy, often as a result of asbestos claims. Bankruptcy trust funds were established to compensate workers who contracted asbestos-related illnesses as a result of their employment. A North Carolina asbestos lawyer can help you identify whether you qualify for compensation from one of these trust funds.
- **Workers' compensation.** If you are unable to work due to a work-related illness, you may be able to pursue a [workers' compensation](#) claim. This includes claims due to asbestos-related illnesses.

- **Social Security Disability.** Social security disability benefits are another option if you are unable to work, especially if you cannot prove that your asbestos-related illness was caused by your occupation.
- **Veterans benefits.** For military personnel, military benefits can include compensation for your illness and a right to receive medical care from any VA facility during your lifetime.
- **Asbestos litigation.** If the company that caused your asbestos exposure is still in operation, you can pursue a claim against them for all of your losses caused by your illness. This includes your medical expenses, lost income, pain and suffering, and other losses. In order to pursue a claim, however, you will most likely need to file a lawsuit, and you should expect that they will deny liability. Many of these cases result in a settlement before going to trial.

Each of these options has its advantages and disadvantages. In some cases, you may qualify for compensation from more than one source.

Before taking action, it is best to discuss your case with an experienced North Carolina asbestos lawyer. They can help you understand your options and decide which option makes the most sense for you.

## Asbestos Causes Illnesses Other Than Cancer

You may be entitled to compensation if you have been diagnosed with an asbestos-related illness, including the following:

- Asbestosis - a chronic lung disease that can range from mild to severe. In severe cases, it can make breathing difficult.
- Pleural plaques - a calcified buildup on the pleural membrane of the lung that can make breathing difficult and painful.
- Pleural effusion - a buildup of excess fluid in the tissues surrounding the lungs that can also lead to breathing problems.

If you have been diagnosed with any illnesses caused by asbestos exposure, we recommend that you speak with a North Carolina asbestos lawyer as soon as possible.

## Contact a North Carolina Asbestos Lawyer at Martin and Jones to Learn More

At Martin & Jones, our asbestos attorneys work with clients all across the United States, investigating where they came in contact with asbestos and who can be held responsible. Please call us at [1-800-662-1234](tel:1-800-662-1234) or [reach out to us](#)

[online](#). All consultations are free and put you under no obligations. We have offices in [Raleigh](#), [Durham](#), and [Wilmington](#).