

Asbestos Update for Federal Employees

- Federal employees exposed to asbestos in the course of their employment are entitled to federal workers' compensation benefits for their injury. You can seek compensation from the companies that were involved in the asbestos industry. There are time limitations that apply to these types of cases and if you suspect that you may have a claim, you should immediately investigate your rights. If you fail to act within the relevant time limitation, you will lose your right to be compensated for your injury.
- Asbestos is a mineral fiber which was widely used for many years for insulating, fireproofing, and other manufacturing and industrial purposes. Unfortunately, asbestos causes a number of debilitating and potentially fatal diseases, including asbestosis, lung cancer, pleural mesothelioma (mesothelioma cancer of the chest lining), peritoneal mesothelioma (mesothelioma cancer of the abdominal lining), and some types of laryngeal or throat cancer.
- It is estimated that more than 21 million Americans have had significant exposure to asbestos. Most of that exposure occurred prior to the mid-1970s in a variety of heavy industries, such as in steel mills, foundries or other metal processing plants, oil and chemical refineries, paper mills, power plants, or practically any facility which included steam-operated machinery. Some of the occupations frequently exposed to asbestos include boilermakers, brickmasons, carpenters, construction workers, electricians, insulators, machinists, maintenance workers, millwrights, painters, pipefitters, plumbers, shipyard workers and seamen, both Naval and merchant marine.
- The effects of asbestos diseases on the individual and the family can be tragic. However, perhaps the greatest tragedy is that asbestos diseases never had to happen. The evidence shows that many of the asbestos manufacturers knew that their products would injure or kill people, but they hid this vital information in order to continue selling their asbestos products. As a result, the asbestos manufacturers are being held legally liable for the damages.
- Federal employees may be eligible for a schedule award for the permanent damage caused to their lung(s) by exposure to asbestos. A schedule award can be collected while a federal employee is drawing regular salary or receiving a retirement pension. A schedule award can frequently be collected as a lump-sum.
- If you or someone you know suffers from an asbestos disease, it is important that you know your legal rights. In many cases, the injured person or his/her family is entitled to workers' compensation from their employer and compensation from the asbestos companies. However, you must act quickly after discovering an asbestos disease since federal workers' compensation rules and state laws limit the amount of time in which you may file a case.