

Standard Interpretations

/ Classification of removal of asbestos-containing gaskets; requirement to conduct removal in a "glove bag."

- **Standard Number:** 1915.1001 ; 1915.1001(b) ; 1915.1001(g)(8)(iv)(A) ; 1926.1101 ; 1926.1101(b) ; 1926.1101(g)(8)(iv)(A)

OSHA requirements are set by statute, standards and regulations. Our interpretation letters explain these requirements and how they apply to particular circumstances, but they cannot create additional employer obligations. This letter constitutes OSHA's interpretation of the requirements discussed. Note that our enforcement guidance may be affected by changes to OSHA rules. Also, from time to time we update our guidance in response to new information. To keep apprised of such developments, you can consult OSHA's website at <http://www.osha.gov>.

April 5, 2007

Drew M. Garner, Jr.
President, Garner & Associates, Inc.
13027 Stiles Lane
Sugar Land, Texas 77478

Dear Mr. Garner:

Thank you for your letter dated February 20, 2007, to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Your letter asked two questions relating to operations on asbestos-containing gaskets and compliance with OSHA's Asbestos standards. This reply letter constitutes OSHA's interpretation only of the requirements discussed and may not be applicable to any question not detailed in your original correspondence. Your paraphrased questions and our replies are below.

Question 1: There is some confusion in the industry regarding OSHA's classification of work for removal of asbestos-containing gaskets (from pipes, vessels, tanks, etc.). Is the removal of asbestos-containing gaskets from piping, vessels, tanks, etc. a Class III asbestos work activity, as defined in 29 CFR 1926.1101?

Reply 1: An employer's competent person must evaluate the work and classify the asbestos activity in accordance with 29 CFR 1926.1101 for construction or 29 CFR 1915.1001 for the shipyard industry. Generally, removing asbestos-containing gaskets is Class II asbestos work. If the work to be performed is repair or maintenance and involves removing no more asbestos-containing material (ACM) than can be contained in one glove bag or waste bag, this work could be Class III asbestos work. See OSHA's definitions of Class II asbestos work, Class III asbestos work, Competent Person, Disturbance, Intact, Removal, and Repair in 1926.1101(b) or 1915.1001(b), as applicable.

On OSHA's website, <http://www.osha.gov>, you may view current editions of our standards. In addition, our website has postings of OSHA directives, including CPL 02-02-063, *Inspection Procedures for Occupational Exposure to Asbestos*, Revised November 3, 1995, and Change-1 January 9, 1996. This directive contains an appendix with common questions and answers regarding the Asbestos standards, in which removals and replacements of asbestos-containing gaskets are described as examples of Class II or Class III asbestos work, depending on the amount of material.

Question 2: Is the removal of an asbestos-containing gasket required to be conducted within a "glove bag"?

Reply 2: If the gasket is visibly deteriorated and unlikely to be removed intact, removal shall be within a glovebag, per 1926.1101(g)(8)(iv)(A) or 1915.1001(g)(8)(iv)(A). Again, this is a site-specific decision to be made by the employer's competent person in accordance with 1926.1101 for construction, or 1915.1001 for the shipyard industry. Additional requirements for engineering and work practice controls apply, as well, depending on whether the work is Class II or Class III.

Thank you for your interest in occupational safety and health. We hope you find this information helpful. OSHA requirements are set by statute, standards, and regulations. Our interpretation letters explain these requirements and how they apply to particular circumstances, but they cannot create additional employer obligations. This letter constitutes OSHA's interpretation of the requirements discussed. Note that our enforcement guidance may be affected by changes to OSHA rules. Also, from time to time we update our guidance in response to new information. To keep apprised of such developments, you can consult OSHA's website at <http://www.osha.gov>.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact the OSHA Office of Health Enforcement at (202) 693-2190.

Sincerely,

Richard E. Fairfax, Director
Directorate of Enforcement Programs

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