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Floods can cause significant damage to homes that can disturb asbestos-containing building materials.
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Asbestos is a mineral fiber that was used in home materials for insulation and fireproofing.
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Older homes, including apartments, may contain asbestos. It can be a problem to your health
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if you breathe in fibers created from disturbed asbestos-containing materials.
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Materials that may contain asbestos include, but are not limited to: insulation on steam
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and hot water-pipes, boilers, furnaces and ducts, vermiculite insulation, ceiling tiles,
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textured paints, and vinyl or asbestos floor tile
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Airborne asbestos fibers can make the air in your home unsafe to breathe.
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Inhaling these microscopic fibers can cause lung cancer, lung scarring, and mesothelioma,
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a cancer of the chest and abdominal linings. Other cancers associated with asbestos exposure
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include those of the larynx, oropharynx , gastrointestinal tract, and kidney. Symptoms may take many
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years to develop following exposure.
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As you enter your home, look around for insulation, vinyl tiles, ceiling tiles, or textured paints
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that may have been damaged in the storm.
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If you see damaged materials that could contain asbestos, this may have caused the asbestos
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to become airborne. Avoid further damage through any disturbance
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during restoration activities and contact a professional trained and certified to handle
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asbestos. You will generally need two experts – one to take samples and test them for
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asbestos in a lab, and another to complete any renovations. This will help protect you

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and your family from the dangers of asbestos.
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If you see building materials that might have asbestos that are undamaged, like floor tiles,
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you can safely leave them in place.
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They are unlikely to present a health risk if left undisturbed.
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If you know or suspect that your home contains asbestos, contact the EPA at (202) 554 -1404
2:08
for information on steps you should take to avoid exposure or visit epa.gov/asbestos.
2:14
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