

Chemically treated wood



Ceilings



Floors



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Fluorescent tubes



Wall thermostats



Light ballasts



Lead paint



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Caulk and sealants



High-voltage electrical equipment



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## STEP 1 Inspect!

Be aware of hazardous wastes that may be in the building infrastructure. Use the checklist inside!

## STEP 2 During removal, protect building residents and demolition staff



Segregate hazardous wastes from other construction debris. Consider hiring a professional to segregate the waste. Take precautions: use personal protective equipment and follow removal, storage, and labeling guidelines to protect yourself, building residents, neighbors, and workers from contaminated dust and other potentially harmful releases.

## STEP 3 Dispose of wastes according to law, to limit liability and protect the environment

Depending on the substance, you may need to dispose of the material in accordance with state and federal hazardous waste disposal laws. If hazardous wastes are simply disposed of with other construction debris, they can be released into the environment at the construction site, during transit, or even eventually from the landfill site. Willful or negligent violation of hazardous waste laws can result in civil or criminal penalties.

For further details, see [www.baywise.org/demolition](http://www.baywise.org/demolition)



*Disclaimer: This brochure presents a brief overview only. Nothing in this document relieves the person conducting the demolition and property owner from responsibility for compliance with federal, state, and local laws and regulations.*



# Ready for DEMOLITION?

## For Safety's Sake, Take Out Hazardous Wastes First!



- Ensure worker and occupant safety
- Comply with state and federal hazardous waste regulations
- Avoid future liability
- Protect the environment

# Inspect

# Take steps to ensure safe removal and appropriate disposal

## CHECK ALL BUILDINGS

...for these potential health hazards:

- Chemically treated wood**  
*(typically in contact with water or soil, including pressure-treated lumber, creosote-treated railroad ties, and chromate-copper-arsenate treated wood)*

**Arsenic, chromium, copper, creosote, and/or pentachlorophenol:** These chemicals are known to be toxic or carcinogenic. Harmful exposure to these chemicals may result from dermal contact with the wood waste, or from inhalation or ingestion of particles (e.g. sawdust). Segregate treated wood waste from other demolition waste. Do not burn or scavenge. Follow storage, labeling, transport and disposal requirements developed by DTSC, details of which are found at [baywise.org/demolition](http://baywise.org/demolition).

- Widespread**  
*(cement-based insulation sheets, shingles, and pipes; blanket or tape insulation on furnaces, water heaters, and ducts; ceiling panels, tiles, and texture; vinyl floor tiles, sheets, and backing; roof shingles and mastic)*

**ASBESTOS:** When asbestos-containing building materials are damaged or disturbed by repair, remodeling, or demolition activities, microscopic fibers can become airborne and can be inhaled into the lungs, where they can cause significant health problems. Hire a certified professional to identify and remove the asbestos-containing materials. Permits and notifications may be required by public health department or local air district. A photo guide of visually recognizable asbestos-containing materials is available at [www.inspectapedia.com/sickhouse/asbestoslook.htm](http://www.inspectapedia.com/sickhouse/asbestoslook.htm).

- Lamps and bulbs**  
*(fluorescent tubes and bulbs, high-intensity discharge (HID) bulbs, neon tube signs and lamps)*
- Thermostats and switches**
- Medical/vet/dental/school**

**MERCURY:** Take care not to break mercury-containing lamps, thermostats, or other equipment; if broken, mercury vapors may be inhaled by workers and occupants. Mercury is toxic, impacting the central nervous system, kidneys, and other organs. Remove all bulbs, lamps, thermostats and other mercury-laden equipment and materials prior to demolition. Keep items intact so mercury does not escape. Handle as universal (hazardous) waste. For disposal locations, see [www.baywise.org/demolition](http://www.baywise.org/demolition). For medical/vet/dental facilities, schools or industrial locations that used mercury in equipment or materials, notify plumber about the potential of finding mercury in sewer pipes, sumps, or sink traps.

- Light ballasts**

**PCBs / DEHP:** PCBs are probable human carcinogens that have a variety of long-term health impacts. Any ballast that does not say "No PCBs" can be expected to contain PCBs. Ballasts manufactured after 1980 or designated "No PCBs" generally fall into two categories: "wet" and "dry." "Wet" contain a dielectric fluid, DEHP, which is a toxic phthalate. Remove ballast from recyclable metal fixture; handle ballast as hazardous waste.

## BUILT OR REMODELED PRIOR TO 1980

- Lead paint**  
*(any structure built/renovated prior to 1978)*

**LEAD:** Many buildings built prior to 1978 have lead-based paint. The lead from paint, chips and dust can pose serious health threats. This includes dust formed when the paint is dry-scraped, dry-sanded, or heated. Test paint for lead. Hire a professional certified to identify and remove lead paint. Lead-painted wood cannot be salvaged, chipped, or burned. Permits and notifications may be required by public health department or local air district. A photo guide of some examples of lead hazards is available at [www.inspectapedia.com/hazmat/leadgeneral.htm](http://www.inspectapedia.com/hazmat/leadgeneral.htm).

- Caulk and sealants\***
- High-voltage electrical equipment**

**PCBs:** Pre-1980 caulk may contain PCBs. PCBs may be present in pre-1980 liquid-filled electrical transformers and capacitors in industrial facilities. When PCB-containing materials are disturbed, PCBs can be released into the air and inhaled or cause skin problems due to dermal contact. Air releases can also lead to eventual exposure in local waterways. Hire a professional for testing, removal, and disposal. \*Industrial or institutional structures may have other PCB-containing materials. See [www.baywise.org/demolition](http://www.baywise.org/demolition).

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