

WAC 296-62-07735 Appendix A—WISHA reference method—Mandatory.

This mandatory appendix specifies the procedure for analyzing air samples for asbestos, tremolite, anthophyllite, and actinolite and specifies quality control procedures that must be implemented by laboratories performing the analysis. The sampling and analytical methods described below represent the elements of the available monitoring methods (such as Appendix B to this section, the most current version of the WISHA method ID-60, or the most current version of the NIOSH 7400 method) which WISHA considers to be essential to achieve adequate employee exposure monitoring while allowing employers to use methods that are already established within their organizations. All employers who are required to conduct air monitoring under WAC 296-62-07709 are required to utilize analytical laboratories that use this procedure, or an equivalent method, for collecting and analyzing samples.

(1) Sampling and analytical procedure.

(a) The sampling medium for air samples must be mixed cellulose ester filter membranes. These must be designated by the manufacturer as suitable for asbestos, tremolite, anthophyllite, and actinolite counting. See below for rejection of blanks.

(b) The preferred collection device is the 25-mm diameter cassette with an open-faced 50-mm electrically conductive extension cowl. The 37-mm cassette may be used if necessary but only if written justification for the need to use the 37-mm filter cassette accompanies the sample results in the employee's exposure monitoring record. Do not reuse or reload cassettes for asbestos sample collection.

(c) An air flow rate between 0.5 liter/min and 4.0 liters/min must be selected for the 25-mm cassette. If the 37-mm cassette is used, an air flow rate between 1 liter/min and 4.0 liters/min must be selected.

(d) Where possible, a sufficient air volume for each air sample must be collected to yield between one hundred and one thousand three hundred fibers per square millimeter on the membrane filter. If a filter darkens in appearance or if loose dust is seen on the filter, a second sample must be started.

(e) Ship the samples in a rigid container with sufficient packing material to prevent dislodging the collected fibers. Packing material that has a high electrostatic charge on its surface (e.g., expanded polystyrene) cannot be used because such material can cause loss of fibers to the sides of the cassette.

(f) Calibrate each personal sampling pump before and after use with a representative filter cassette installed between the pump and the calibration devices.

(g) Personal samples must be taken in the "breathing zone" of the employee (i.e., attached to or near the collar or lapel near the worker's face).

(h) Fiber counts must be made by positive phase contrast using a microscope with an 8 to 10 X eyepiece and a 40 to 45 X objective for a total magnification of approximately 400 X and a numerical aperture of 0.65 to 0.75. The microscope must also be fitted with a green or blue filter.

(i) The microscope must be fitted with a Walton-Beckett eyepiece graticule calibrated for a field diameter of one hundred micrometers (+/- 2 micrometers).

(j) The phase-shift detection limit of the microscope must be about 3 degrees measured using the HSE phase shift test slide as outlined below.

(i) Place the test slide on the microscope stage and center it under the phase objective.

(ii) Bring the blocks of grooved lines into focus.

Note: The slide consists of seven sets of grooved lines (ca. 20 grooves to each block) in descending order of visibility from sets one to seven, seven being the least visible. The requirements for asbestos, tremolite, anthophyllite, and actinolite counting are that the microscope optics must resolve the grooved lines in set three completely, although they may appear somewhat faint, and that the grooved lines in sets six and seven must be invisible. Sets four and five must be at least partially visible but may vary slightly in visibility between microscopes. A microscope that fails to meet these requirements has either too low or too high a resolution to be used for asbestos, tremolite, anthophyllite, and actinolite counting.

(iii) If the image deteriorates, clean and adjust the microscope optics. If the problem persists, consult the microscope manufacturer.

(k) Each set of samples taken will include ten percent blanks or a minimum of two blanks. These blanks must come from the same lot as the filters used for sample collection. The field blank results must be averaged and subtracted from the analytical results before reporting. Any samples represented by a blank having a fiber count in excess of the detection limit of the method being used must be rejected.

(l) The samples must be mounted by the acetone/triacetin method or a method with an equivalent index of refraction and similar clarity.

(m) Observe the following counting rules.

(i) Count only fibers equal to or longer than five micrometers. Measure the length of curved fibers along the curve.

(ii) Count all particles as asbestos, tremolite, anthophyllite, and actinolite that have a length-to-width ratio (aspect ratio) of three to one or greater.

(iii) Fibers lying entirely within the boundary of the Walton-Beckett graticule field must receive a count of one. Fibers crossing the boundary once, having one end within the circle, must receive the count of one-half. Do not count any fiber that crosses the graticule boundary more than once. Reject and do not count any other fibers even though they may be visible outside the graticule area.

(iv) Count bundles of fibers as one fiber unless individual fibers can be identified by observing both ends of an individual fiber.

(v) Count enough graticule fields to yield 100 fibers. Count a minimum of 20 fields; stop counting at 100 fields regardless of fiber count.

(n) Blind recounts must be conducted at the rate of ten percent.

(2) Quality control procedures.

(a) Intralaboratory program. Each laboratory and/or each company with more than one microscopist counting slides must establish a statistically designed quality assurance program involving blind recounts and comparisons between microscopists to monitor the variability of counting by each microscopist and between microscopists. In a company with more than one laboratory, the program must include all laboratories and must also evaluate the laboratory-to-laboratory variability.

(b) Interlaboratory program.

(i) Each laboratory analyzing asbestos, tremolite, anthophyllite, and actinolite samples for compliance determination must implement an interlaboratory quality assurance program that as a minimum includes participation of at least two other independent laboratories. Each laboratory must participate in round robin testing at least once every six months with at least all the other laboratories in its interlaboratory quality assurance group. Each laboratory must submit slides typical of its own work load for use in this program. The round robin must be designed and results analyzed using appropriate statistical methodology.

(ii) All laboratories should participate in a national sample testing scheme such as the Proficiency Analytical Testing Program (PAT), the Asbestos Registry sponsored by the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA).

(c) All individuals performing asbestos, tremolite, anthophyllite, and actinolite analysis must have taken the NIOSH course for sampling and evaluating airborne asbestos, tremolite, anthophyllite, and actinolite dust or an equivalent course, recognized by the department.

(d) When the use of different microscopes contributes to differences between counters and laboratories, the effect of the different microscope must be evaluated and the microscope must be replaced, as necessary.

(e) Current results of these quality assurance programs must be posted in each laboratory to keep the microscopists informed.

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