

Recommended Practices for Controlling Asphalt Exposures during the Installation of Asphalt Products without Using Hot Liquid Asphalt



Introduction

About 95% of North American asphalt roofing production consists of products that are not applied using hot liquid asphalt. Prepared roofing such as asphalt shingles, roll roofing and underlayments, as well as coatings, sealers, adhesives, cements, caulks, primers and other solvent-based (“cutback”) or water-based (emulsion) roofing products, are applied at ambient temperature, without heating. Likewise, some built-up roofing and modified bitumen systems are applied using adhesives, without heating. Other modified bitumen systems are applied using torches or hot air welders to soften the roofing material enough to ensure good adhesion to the substrate. The potential for exposure to asphalt during these operations by inhalation or absorption through the skin is far lower than on jobs using hot liquid asphalt, and in most settings is minimal or non-existent.

Nevertheless, ARMA and NRCA recommend, as a matter of prudence and good industrial hygiene practice, taking the following precautions to minimize inhalation and skin contact:

- Wherever possible, work upwind while installing these products.
- Observe the recommended precautions for both asphalt and non-asphalt components of the product in SDSs and product installation guides.
- Wear gloves – cotton or leather gloves for solid materials and torch/hot air welder jobs; chemical-resistant gloves for liquid products.

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- Wear goggles or face shields during spray application of liquid products and torch/hot air welder jobs. Consider safety glasses that have added protection from airborne emissions from these operations, such as foam padded safety glasses.
- On re-roofing jobs involving the removal of an existing asphalt roof, observe the equipment and work practice recommendations in the companion publication "Recommended Practices for Controlling Asphalt Exposures during Tear-Offs of Asphalt Roofs."
- Wash exposed areas of the skin with soap and water as soon as possible after each shift and, if possible, before eating, drinking, smoking, chewing tobacco or gum, applying cosmetics, or using toilet facilities. Fuels, solvents and other industrial chemicals should never be used to clean condensed fumes or asphalt from the skin.
- Do not eat, drink, smoke, chew tobacco or gum, apply cosmetics, or have open or exposed food and beverages, in areas where fumes, vapors, mists or dusts from installation of these products are present or may have been deposited on surfaces.
- Work clothing that comes into contact with liquid asphalt products or emissions from torch/hot air welder jobs should be removed as soon as possible after each workday, should be kept separate from other clothing, and should not be re-worn unless laundered.

If you need more information, or have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us:



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