



“TAKE HOME” EXPOSURES

Workers in contaminated environments can carry hazardous substances home from work on their clothes, bodies, tools, and other items. Workers can unknowingly expose their families to these substances, causing potentially causing various health effects. In our business as consultants, we find ourselves in various settings and need to protect ourselves and families from take-home exposures.

CONTAMINANTS

There are numerous types of potential take-home contaminants. The following are very common:

- Asbestos
- Metal dusts such as lead, cadmium and hexavalent chromium
- Mercury
- Silica

ROUTES OF EXPOSURE

The common routes of contaminant transfer and potential subsequent exposure are:

- *Clothing & Equipment:*
By not paying attention to contaminants in your work environment, you may unknowingly transfer contaminants to your car and home from your clothing and equipment. When the clothes are put through the washer and dryer the machines become contaminated and can affect the other clothes being laundered.
- *Person:*
Common transfer of contaminants to the home is from dirty hands and hair. This is an easy route to pass contaminants to family members. Young children may be at higher risk of falling victim to this exposure.

PREVENTION & DECONTAMINATION

Prevention is the best way to keep your family and home free of contaminants. Some ways to achieve this:

- Use good safety and hygiene practices to reduce exposure.
- Use gloves, work coveralls, Tyvek suits and other appropriate PPE to prevent contamination of you and your work clothing.
- Clean of equipment prior to transfer to your car.
- Where appropriate, such as on active asbestos abatement projects, shower appropriately leaving the work area.
- Do not take tools, equipment, or other potentially contaminated items home.
- Prevent family members from visiting work environments with contaminants present.
- If you clothes become contaminated, inform your project manager and arrangements will be made to launder contaminated clothes separately and/or professionally.



“TAKE HOME” EXPOSURES QUIZ

- 1) Which of the following is not considered a dangerous potential “Take Home” contaminant?
 - a. Cadmium
 - b. Dirt
 - c. Lead
 - d. Mercury

- 2) Which of the following are routes of exposure for “Take Home” contaminants?
 - a. Clothing
 - b. Equipment
 - c. Person
 - d. All of the Above

- 3) **True or False:** The best defense against take home exposures is prevention through good work and hygiene practices.

- 4) If your work clothes become contaminated at a jobsite due to unforeseen circumstances you should:
 - a. Do nothing, because one time is no big deal.
 - b. Just try and clean your clothes the best you can at the jobsite.
 - c. Immediately inform your project manager and work out a strategy to safely address the situation.
 - d. Put a Tyvek suit on over your clothes and drive home.

SCORE: PASS / FAIL

Employee Signature

Supervisor Signature

Date