



ASBESTOS DISPOSAL IN THE VOIVODSHIP (POLISH ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICT) LUBLIN ASBESTOS AS A HEALTH RISK: A CHALLENGE FOR POLAND



In the past, asbestos was greatly appreciated as a building material until it was realised that asbestos dust posed a serious health risk. Switzerland is helping Poland to introduce a system for the monitoring and disposal of asbestos in the voivodship Lublin. It will also remove rubbish containing asbestos from illegal dumps and will renew the roofs of 6600 houses.

Asbestos is the generic term for a group of natural, fibrous silicate minerals. Because asbestos is draught-proof, heatproof and resistant to acid, is an excellent insulator and is relatively cheap, it was widely used in Poland, particularly for the production of



asbestos cement products in the building industry. Today it is well-known that asbestos fibres that are released during the renovation, rubbing or weathering are a health hazard when they are inhaled. Even small concentrations of asbestos dust in the air can be carcinogenic. Poland therefore plans to dispose of all materials contaminated with asbestos by 2032.

NEW ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN THE VOIVODSHIP LUBLIN

In the framework of its enlargement contribution, Switzerland will spend CHF 13.2 million on the disposal of asbestos in the voivodship Lublin. This will improve the living conditions and the health of the population of Lublin, where there are still high concentrations of asbestos as a building material.

One regional and three small local offices will be set up to ensure that the asbestos is disposed of correctly. These offices will be responsible for identifying material containing asbestos and ensuring that it is neutralised. In recent years, material containing asbestos has often been disposed of on illegal dumps. The project will dispose of and neutralise 4500 tonnes of such material per year.

RENEWAL OF 6600 ROOFS CONTAINING ASBESTOS

House roofs covered with tiles made of asbestos cement are also to be replaced. As the asbestos weathers in the course of decades, there is a danger that fibres and dust will come loose and be inadvertently inhaled by those living in the houses. Material containing asbestos will be removed, taken away and neutralised. The new roofing will have to be paid for by the tenants, although poorer households will be able to apply for financial support. The Polish partners have opened up special credit lines with advantageous conditions to help such people. As a result of these measures, 45,000 tonnes of material containing asbestos can be permanently disposed of in an environmentally friendly manner.



INFORMATION ABOUT ASBESTOS AS A HEALTH RISK

The Polish authorities will run an information campaign to raise awareness about the health risks posed by asbestos. It will focus on the dangers of illegal and incorrect disposal. It will also suggest solutions and show how asbestos can be safely disposed of and neutralised.

FURTHER PROJECTS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF WASTE MANAGEMENT IN POLAND

In total, Switzerland will contribute CHF 35.8 million to three Polish projects. In the framework of these projects about 14,000 households will benefit from the removal of asbestos.

I am pleased to learn that the Marshal's Office of Lubelskie Voivodeship is implementing this project, together with the Swiss Contribution Office, because it will enable me to dispose of asbestos virtually free of charge. I will not have to look for a licensed asbestos removal company, arrange transport or worry about recycling, since the Marshal's Office will take care of everything. I have applied for funding for the removal of the roofing material from my house that contains asbestos, because I am aware of the dangers associated with exposure to this substance. I hope that more people will make use of this opportunity in the future, since they will be able to improve their living conditions and have a positive impact on the environment in our region.

Antoni Startek,
resident of Kraśnik in Lubelskie Voivodeship

THE PROJECT IN BRIEF

SUBJECT

Waste disposal

COUNTRY

Poland

STARTING POINT / BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Poland is one of the countries in which asbestos was used very frequently in the building industry. Today we know that asbestos dust in the air causes cancer. The voivodship Lublin will have to dispose of about 2,000,000 tonnes of asbestos in order to protect the population from health risks.

PURPOSE

The health risks posed by asbestos fibres are to be reduced by means of the renovation of buildings and the introduction of a system of waste disposal. The overall living conditions in Lublin will be improved as a result.

ACTIVITIES

An asbestos disposal system will be introduced, waste containing asbestos will be removed from illegal dumps and 6600 contaminated house roofs will be renovated

TARGET GROUPS

The voivodship Lublin and its 2.2 million inhabitants

COSTS

Total budget of the project:

CHF 15.55 million

Swiss contribution:

CHF 13.22 million

RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Voivodship Lublin

DURATION

2011 - 2016