



An environment-friendly product is one which...

1) Is produced by low energy-consuming technology

Manufacture of some products involve high energy consumption, which means a drain on finite resources (hydroelectricity, fossil fuels, etc.), some of which are non-renewable.

Compared to products coming from the petrochemical or metallurgical industry, asbestos-cement products consume much less energy; in fact, the largest proportion of energy consumption goes into the production of cement.

2) Has a long useful service life

Short product life means you have to replace more often, create more waste, and needs more energy consumption, etc.

The resistance of asbestos-cement products to corrosion, to ultra-violet rays, to rot etc. is remarkable and unique. In fact, few other products have such a guaranteed long service life.

3) Is made from simple starting materials

Production of final products may involve complex mixtures of synthetic starting materials, which may be harmful by themselves (ex.: PVC made from vinyl chloride monomers - a known carcinogen), and present a risk not only for plant workers, but for general population as well.

Composition of high density asbestos-cement products is uniquely simple, and technology is readily available to developing countries, without resorting to the use of more complex ingredients, whose safe handling may present difficulties far greater than those required for the controlled manufacture of asbestos-cement products.

4) Presents a relatively low risk during its manufacture

Use of countless products may cause environmental damage to fauna, flora, rivers, lakes, the sea, underground waters may (does) occur, following explosions, radioactive leakage, acid precipitations, etc., as a result of systems malfunction, equipment failure, human error, carelessness or other unforeseen reasons (ex.: Bohpal, Tchernobyl, Minamata).

With controlled plant operations, asbestos-cement manufacturing presents a far lesser risk to the environment, compared to many other product manufacturing technologies based on synthetic chemistry or metallurgy.

5) Presents a relatively low risk when in use

Some products may be consumed by fire, releasing large clouds of toxic and/or corrosive gases.

Whereas many combustible construction materials may, in case of fire, release clouds of gases and/or fumes highly toxic to man and to the environment, asbestos-cement products are by definition resistant to heat and fire; in fact, they may actually prevent or minimize the spread of conflagration.

6) Presents a relatively low risk when stored or transported, prior to or after use

Transportation and storage of some raw materials or finished products prior to their use, or when discarded after use (ex.: corrosive liquids, hazardous chemicals, storage of discarded PCBs, spent lead batteries, old tire piles, etc. may pose a hazard to both the environment or the general population.

Transportation and handling of asbestos-cement products does require appropriate care, but efficient and recognized practices are simple and straightforward. The safe transportation and storage of some other products is far more complex, and mishaps can (and do) occur. Compare the risk of environmental damage of a tanker full of crude oil or other petrochemicals to the risk of a cargo of asbestos-cement products.

7) Constitutes a relatively low risk at final disposal site

Some products present a high degree of hazard to the environment (soil and/or water contamination) if not securely contained in specially designed and tightly supervised disposal sites.

Safe disposal of many modern products and waste has become an environmental and economic nightmare, often requiring especially designed and costly disposal sites, which must be monitored constantly to prevent leakage of contaminating substances into the environment. Waste management is often so complex and costly that "easier" solutions are often found... Chrysotile-cement waste disposal is inexpensive, simple and recognized practices are well known. They are made of naturally occurring material which return to the environment after use.

ON ALL COUNTS, CHRYSOTILE-CEMENT PRODUCTS ARE ENVIRONMENTFRIENDLY!

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