



Construction Material Salvage typically requires the deconstruction of a building in a way that preserves building materials for future reuse. The salvage of lumber, bricks, steel, windows, stone, floor coverings, ornamental items, etc. are common, if in good condition, for the reuse in new structures. It is becoming more necessary as virgin materials are more expensive. The reuse of salvaged materials also reduces unnecessary landfilling.

Potential dangers to consider

- Respiratory – dirt, dust, mold, and mildew accumulated in old buildings can be an irritant to the lungs of construction workers, using dust masks or respirators is important. If gas powered equipment is being used inside the spaces, use equipment exhaust scrubbers with plenty of fresh air ventilation to all enclosed spaces where workers are present.
- Overhead hazards & sharp objects – When deconstruction is occurring there are a wide range of hazards to look out for overhead, below, and all around. Sharp objects can result from the deconstruction process along with quickly changing conditions resulting in changes to the building's structural integrity. Proceed with caution, look around, be sure there is a clear understanding of where co-workers are located at all times.

- Other potential hazards – Even when phase II environmental site assessments have taken place there can periodically be new signs of lead- based paint and/or asbestos that show up in the layers of old construction. If there are any signs of old insulation, black mastic, 9x9" VCT floor tiles, etc. that look suspicious, ask for a supervisor to look before continuing work.

Material Handling – The primary hazards of concern are heavy lifting, overexertion, and sharp objects that could cut, or puncture construction workers if not safely removed and cleaned prior to handling.

Scheduling – Be sure clear and concise planning is being implemented and communicated in a way that reduces unnecessary hazards from construction workers. Use heavy equipment as much as possible at the beginning to minimize hazards to those doing work by hand.

Air Quality – In some cases, air quality monitoring may be required to ensure protection of the construction workers and to provide documentation that proper safety protocol was implemented.