



## Facilities Services Workers Asbestos Safety Update

All Facilities Services workers must complete annual UCSF asbestos awareness training. Prior to 1981, asbestos, which is a naturally occurring mineral fiber, was used in a wide variety of construction products including spray-applied fireproofing, piping insulation, boiler and HVAC air duct insulation, roofing materials, cement panels, cement pipe, wallboard, surfacing plaster, acoustical treatment, vinyl sheet flooring, vinyl floor tile, floor leveling compound and underlayment, adhesives, ceiling tile, counter tops, fire doors, and sealant. During the 1980's and early 1990's, non-friable flooring and construction mastics, roofing materials, and asbestos cement products were also sporadically used in building construction. Roof penetration mastic is still commonly used. The majority of UCSF-owned buildings contain PACMs. The University has conducted numerous building surveys and has implemented stringent control measures to identify and safely manage these PACMs.

All suspect building materials must be inspected for asbestos by the UCSF Office of Environment, Health & Safety (EH&S) prior to the commencement of destructive demolition or removal, including cutting, drilling, sanding, grinding, or other destructive activity (see exceptions below under training and work practices). You must report any observed damage to suspect friable asbestos-containing building materials to your supervisor, building manager, and/or EH&S.

### Health Hazards

"Asbestos" is a commercial term for a family of naturally occurring fibrous minerals sharing certain physical and chemical properties. Asbestos may constitute a hazard when free fibers become airborne and can be inhaled into the deep lungs. The most common potential asbestos-related injuries include: asbestosis, a characteristic scarring and often debilitating lung disease from high levels of asbestos exposure; lung cancer; and pleural mesothelioma (a cancer of the lung cavity lining). When asbestos in products is embedded or encapsulated and intact, and left undisturbed, it is unlikely that asbestos fiber concentrations exceeding the Cal OSHA permissible exposure limit will be released into the workplace.

When suspect materials are disturbed through construction, repairs or asbestos removal activities, specific Regulatory procedures to prevent exposure must be strictly followed by Facility Services Workers. Employees who disturb PACMs, without clearance from EH&S, may be disciplined for violation of safe work practices.

## Training and Work Practices

After completing the mandated annual 4 hour OSHA Class III Asbestos Work Practices training, Facilities Services employees can legally and safely drill, or cut and remove, up to 3 square feet of PACMs that includes drywall systems, ceiling panels, and floor tile. Workers can also HEPA vacuum 2'x4' ceiling panels beneath asbestos containing spray applied fireproofing.

Work with these PACMs can be conducted for no more than one hour for any work shift. Portable containment systems should always be used when accessing ceiling cavities (beneath asbestos containing fireproofing) with the potential for PACMs to fall to the floor when moving ceiling panels.

Work practices must include “point-of-cut” or “point-of-disturbance” containment systems, such as vacuum shrouded tools attached to a HEPA vacuum. Inexpensive shrouds are available for drilling, core cutting, sawing, and similar activities. The waste from this work must fit into one asbestos waste bag.

## Asbestos Abatement Contractors

Greater quantities, longer work times or work with other with potentially asbestos containing materials than those described immediately above, must be handled by trained and certified asbestos abatement contractors.

## Asbestos Waste

All waste generated from work described above must be doubled bagged and placed in an approved asbestos bag that is kept in a secure location until an asbestos subcontractor can be hired to properly dispose of manifested waste material. HEPA vacuum waste must be emptied by asbestos subcontractors and similarly stored, manifested, and disposed. EH&S (HMM) must sign and approve all hazardous waste manifests.

## Environment, Health and Safety

UCSF is committed to safely and effectively managing asbestos on campus. The University maintains staff of certified professionals at EH&S who conduct building material surveys, coordinate and supervise asbestos abatement activities, perform air monitoring and provide training. If you have specific questions related to this information or would like an EH&S staff member to review the above information with you, please contact EH&S at (415) 476-1300.