

WORK PRACTICES FOR ENTERING ASBESTOS CONTAMINATED AREAS

SCOPE

These recommendations are intended to provide protection from asbestos fiber exposure for persons entering areas known to have friable asbestos containing materials which have become de laminated or damaged which contaminate the area with debris. These practices may not applicable to asbestos removal projects or operations which involve the intentional handling of asbestos.

DESIGNATION AND NOTIFICATION

All employees who must enter contaminated areas should have completed the two hours asbestos awareness training session which included the following:

1. Information regarding asbestos and its various uses and forms.
2. Information on the health effects associated with asbestos exposure.
3. Locations of asbestos identified throughout each building in which they work.
4. Recognition of damage deterioration, and de lamination of asbestos containing building materials.
5. Name and telephone number of the asbestos coordinator.

All employees who must enter a contaminated area and physically touch or disturb friable asbestos containing materials shall as a minimum have completed an additional fourteen hours of operations and maintenance training which include the following.

6. OSHA and EPA regulations for handling asbestos containing materials.
7. Use of personal protective equipment including hands-on training.
8. Description of the proper methods of handling ACBM.
9. Packaging, disposal, cleanup and decontamination procedures.
10. Hands-on training in the use of personal protective measures and good work practices and small scale removal projects.

MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

All employees who are exposed to airborne concentrations of fibers of asbestos above the TWA and/or excursion limit shall be provided with an annual physical examinations. Contents of examinations should be determined by a physician, but as a minimum, should include:

1. A chest roentgenogram (posterior-anterior 14 x 17 inches).
2. A history to elicit symptomology of respiratory disease.
3. Pulmonary functions tests to include forced vital capacity (FVC) and forced expiratory volume to one second (FEV 1.0).

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Employees should wear appropriate respirators and protective clothing at all times when entering or working in contaminated areas. Minimal acceptable respirators are half-mask, air purifying respirators equipped with high-efficiency filters. The respirator/filter combination should be approved for protection against radio nuclides; and against dusts, fumes, and mists having a time-weighted average acceptable exposure of less than 0.05 mg/m³. Protective clothing should include full-body coveralls, head coverings, and shoe coverings. The coveralls should be made of materials which are impervious to asbestos fibers. (Clothing made of Tyvek TM meet this criteria).

A respiratory program which meets the recommendations of American National Standard for Respiratory Protection Z 88.2-1982 should be instituted to ensure proper use and care of respiratory protection. The UAB Department of Occupational Health and Safety can be consulted to select approved respirators, provide employee training, and necessary fit testing.

PROTECTIVE PROCEDURES

Before entering posted, contaminated areas, employees should:

1. Put on two layers of the prescribed protective coveralls, closing the openings of the outer layer at the wrists and ankles with tape.
2. Put on the prescribed head and foot coverings, ensuring that all clothing is covered.
3. Put on the assigned respirator according to respirator training instructions. A negative pressure test should be conducted to ensure for a proper fit.
4. The protective equipment should not be removed for any reason while in the contaminated area. It should be noted that wearing this equipment in warm temperatures and/or high humidity may result in heat stress conditions. If such conditions arise, the UAB Occupational Health and Safety Department should be consulted to determine the need for work-rest regimens.

5. Upon leaving contaminated areas, employees should remove the outer layer of protective clothing just inside the entrance to the area and the inner layer after leaving the contaminated area. The clothing should be immediately placed into a labeled, impermeable plastic bag. The employee should continue to wear the respirator until the protective clothing has been removed and sealed in the plastic bag.
6. The respirator should be removed and placed in a labeled impermeable bag. The bag should be sealed and the respirator returned for cleaning and sanitizing.
7. Immediately after removing protective clothing and respirators, the employee should thoroughly wash all exposed skin with soap and water.
8. Bags containing contaminated clothing and/or material should be disposed of in authorized disposal sites in accordance with local regulations.
9. Employees should not eat, drink or smoke while in contaminated area or until after they have removed all protective equipment and washed. Food, beverages, and tobacco products should not be taken into a contaminated area.
10. If employee clothing should become contaminated with asbestos-bearing material, it should be removed as soon as possible and placed in a labeled, impermeable plastic bag. The bag should be sealed and sent to a laundry facility for washing. The employee should shower immediately after removing contaminated clothing.
11. Any spillage of asbestos material should be removed by a HEPA filtered vacuum cleaner. A regular type vacuum cleaner or broom should never be used for clean up. This work should only be performed by individuals who have completed the fourteen hour operation and maintenance training sessions.
12. In some cases, it may be necessary to "contain" the area while work above the ceiling is performed. The Occupational Health and Safety Department should be consulted if there are questions regarding this decision. This work should only be performed by individuals who have completed the fourteen hour operation and maintenance training sessions.

Any questions regarding these recommendations should be directed to the UAB Department of Occupational Health and Safety.