

TO: ALL UC BERKELEY FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS

**RE: ASBESTOS CONTAINING BUILDING MATERIALS ON THE
BERKELEY CAMPUS**

This notice contains general information regarding asbestos on the UC Berkeley campus, and is required by law to be provided to all employees. Two university departments, the Office of Environment, Health & Safety (EH&S) and Facilities Services maintain an active asbestos operations and maintenance program on campus.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Intact, sealed, and undisturbed asbestos-containing materials are not a hazard.

Asbestos is a common, naturally occurring group of fibrous minerals previously used in a variety of building materials. While asbestos fibers are still used in some building materials, campus policy prohibits the use of asbestos-containing materials in all new construction and renovation projects. Asbestos is located in certain pipe insulation, doors, textured paints and plasters, structural fireproofing, floor tiles, adhesives, and roofing on campus. Asbestos fiber release could result from a fire, earthquake, other natural disasters, or when someone unknowingly damages or disturbs asbestos-containing material.

Significant and long-term exposure to asbestos from activities that directly disturb asbestos-containing materials (such as asbestos mining) can lead to a variety of respiratory diseases, including asbestosis, lung cancer, and mesothelioma (cancer of the lung lining). Mesothelioma may result from much smaller exposures to asbestos.

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM AND SURVEYS

The asbestos health risk posed to university employees is extremely low due to the campus's asbestos operations and maintenance program. This program dictates safe removal of damaged, friable asbestos, in-place management of undamaged asbestos-containing materials, and asbestos abatement during construction and renovation. The program documents are available for review at the EH&S website.

In the early 1980s, two campus-wide asbestos surveys were conducted to provide comprehensive information about asbestos in campus buildings. Additional survey data is collected as part of the ongoing asbestos operations and maintenance program during all construction and renovation projects.

GENERAL PROCEDURES AND HANDLING RESTRICTIONS

To avoid potential exposure, only trained and state-certified employees may remove, drill, bore, or in any way disturb asbestos-containing construction material.

Building Renovations and Demolition

To prevent asbestos fiber release, prior to beginning any construction or renovation project, procedures require a survey to determine whether asbestos-containing materials might be disturbed during the project. The Facilities Services asbestos coordinator or an independent industrial hygiene firm may perform the survey. Any asbestos that might be disturbed must be properly removed prior to the construction or renovation work. Asbestos removal and encapsulation work is performed by asbestos-licensed contractors under specifications developed jointly by Facilities Services and EH&S. This ensures that areas are safe during asbestos removal and are rendered safe for re-occupancy or the continuance of construction work. An independent industrial hygiene firm oversees asbestos removal work, conducts air sampling, and ensures the safety of nearby personnel.

Small Renovations and Building Maintenance

Small-scale removals or repairs are handled under contract or by Cal/OSHA-certified employees supervised by a Cal/OSHA-certified asbestos supervisor. Work conducted by the Facilities Services personnel is conducted according to the program requirements.

EH&S and Facilities Services take the following actions to minimize campus exposure to asbestos:

- **Maintain up-to-date information** regarding the location and condition of all asbestos-containing materials on campus.
- **Respond to employee concerns** to assure that any asbestos hazards are properly addressed.
- **Conduct air sampling** and physical inspection of work areas that contain asbestos.
- **Train campus employees** who work with asbestos, as well as those in areas requiring corrective action.
- **Educate the campus community** on the relative hazards of asbestos and on the importance of notifying Facilities Services of the presence of damaged materials suspected to contain asbestos.

Information on campus asbestos abatement projects, or the location of asbestos-containing materials, is available during business hours through the Facilities Services Customer Service Center (510-642-1032). For general inquiries about asbestos and exposure contact EH&S (510-642-3073).