

# City of Urbandale

## Asbestos Exposure Control Policy



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## **Purpose**

This policy is intended to protect employees from health risks caused by asbestos exposure during Class III or Class IV asbestos work, as defined by OSHA.

Asbestos was commonly used in many older building materials, including insulation, pipe wrap, floor tile, ceiling materials, and cement products.

Breathing in asbestos fibers can cause serious diseases such as asbestosis, lung cancer, and mesothelioma. These illnesses often develop many years after exposure and can be fatal.

A copy of this policy is available to all employees. It can be found online at [www.urbandale.org/Safety](http://www.urbandale.org/Safety) or by contacting the employee's supervisor, or the Director of Risk Management/Support Services.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to all employees who perform Class III asbestos work, which includes repair and maintenance activities that disturb asbestos-containing materials (ACM) or presumed asbestos-containing materials (PACM) or Class IV asbestos work, which includes the cleanup of ACM or PACM.

Examples of Class III work include:

- Repairing small sections of pipe insulation
- Replacing gaskets, valves, or fittings
- Minor drilling or cutting into ACM or PACM
- Accessing asbestos-containing materials for maintenance

Examples of Class IV work include:

- Cleanup of dust from Class III work
- Cleanup of waste materials or debris from Class III work

Employees are not permitted to perform Class I or Class II asbestos work under this policy.

## **Policy Administration**

The Director of Risk Management/Support Services is responsible for reviewing this policy annually and ensuring OSHA compliance.

Department supervisors are responsible for:

- Identifying Class III asbestos work
- Ensuring employees are properly trained
- Implementing required exposure controls

Employees are responsible for following this policy, using required controls and protective equipment, and reporting damaged or suspected asbestos materials.

## Identification of Asbestos

### Types of asbestos:

Asbestos-Containing Material (ACM) is any material that contains more than 1% asbestos.

Asbestos can be defined as friable or non-friable. Friable means that the material can be crumbled with hand pressure and is therefore likely to emit fibers. The fibrous or fluffy sprayed-on materials used for fireproofing, insulation, or sound proofing are friable and they readily release airborne fibers if disturbed.

Materials such as vinyl-asbestos floor tile or roofing felts are considered non-friable and generally do not emit airborne fibers unless subjected to sanding or cutting. Additionally, asbestos cement pipe or sheet can emit airborne fibers if the materials are cut, abraded or sawed, or if they are broken during demolition operations.

Presumed Asbestos-Containing Material (PACM) includes:

- Thermal system insulation
- Road Surfacing materials
- Roofing materials installed before 1980
- Resilient flooring installed before 1981

Employees shall not disturb ACM or PACM unless:

- The work is classified as Class III, and
- Required controls and training are in place

### Identifying Asbestos:

There are many substances that workers contact that may contain asbestos and have the potential to release fiber. Only rarely can asbestos in a product be determined from labeling or by consulting the manufacture. The presence of asbestos cannot be confirmed visually in many cases. The only way to positively identify asbestos is through laboratory analysis according to OSHA standards. If the presence of asbestos is suspected always assume that it is an asbestos containing material and have it analyzed.

## Exposure Limits

OSHA exposure limits for asbestos are followed and are:

- Permissible Exposure Limit (PEL):
  - 0.1 fibers per cubic centimeter of air (0.1 f/cc) averaged over an 8-hour workday.
- Excursion Limit:
  - 1.0 fibers per cubic centimeter of air (1.0 f/cc) averaged over 30 minutes.

## Exposure Assessment

Employee exposure will be evaluated using:

- Air monitoring
- Objective data
- Historical exposure data for similar Class III tasks

Exposure assessments will be repeated when:

- Work methods change
- New materials or equipment are used
- Employees may be exposed to higher asbestos levels

Employees will be informed of monitoring results within 15 working days of receipt.

## **Engineering and Administrative Controls**

The following controls will be used during Class III asbestos work:

- Wet methods to keep materials damp
- HEPA-filtered local exhaust ventilation, when feasible
- Mini-enclosures or glove bags for pipe insulation repairs
- Limiting the size and duration of the work area

Engineering and administrative controls must be used before relying on respirators whenever feasible.

### Signs and Labels:

Employees will follow warning signs and labels and should not disturb the asbestos containing materials.

Signs and labels shall identify the material which is present, its location, and appropriate work practices to follow, that will ensure the ACM and/or PACM will not be disturbed.

## **Respiratory Protection and Personal Protective Equipment**

Respirators and protective equipment will be provided at no cost to employees.

At a minimum, half-mask air-purifying respirators with HEPA filters will be used unless monitoring shows lower exposure levels are acceptable.

Respirator use must comply with the City's Respiratory Protection Program and OSHA 29 CFR 1910.134.

Employees required to wear respirators must complete:

- Medical evaluations
- Fit testing
- Respirator training

Protective clothing such as disposable coveralls, gloves, and foot coverings will be worn as required.

## **Regulated Areas**

Regulated areas will be established where Class III asbestos work is performed. Access will be limited to authorized and trained employees only. Warning signs will be posted at all regulated area entrances.

## **Housekeeping and Waste Handling**

Dry sweeping, dry brushing, and compressed air are not permitted for asbestos cleanup.

Approved cleanup methods include:

- Wet cleaning
- HEPA-filtered vacuuming

Asbestos waste will be:

- Sealed in leak-tight containers
- Labeled according to OSHA and EPA requirements
- Disposed of in accordance with all applicable regulations

## **Medical Surveillance**

Medical surveillance will be provided at no cost to employees who:

- Are exposed to asbestos at or above the PEL, or
- Are required to wear respirators

Medical evaluations will include:

- Baseline examinations
- Periodic follow-up exams as required
- Written medical opinions from licensed healthcare providers

## **Training and Communication**

Employees performing Class III asbestos work must receive asbestos awareness and task-specific training before starting work.

Training will cover:

- Health effects of asbestos exposure
- Identification of ACM and PACM
- Proper Class III work practices
- Use of wet methods and containment
- Respiratory protection and PPE
- This written policy

## **Recordkeeping**

The City will maintain records of:

- Exposure assessments
- Air monitoring results
- Medical surveillance
- Training documentation

Records will be kept according to OSHA requirements and applicable state laws.

## **Employee Rights**

Employees have the right to:

- Review exposure and medical records
- Receive information about asbestos hazards
- Report unsafe conditions without retaliation

## **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as needed to ensure continued OSHA compliance and employee safety.