



THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Environmental Health and Safety

May 24, 2017

The CUA Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) office is responsible for the University's asbestos management program. Asbestos was a common additive in many building products in the past. Most buildings on campus of older construction may contain a variety of asbestos-containing materials. Examples may include flooring products, insulating materials, adhesives and sealants, acoustical or decorative finishes, and others. Such known asbestos-containing materials are annually inspected by the EHS office to ensure the safety of building occupants.

Asbestos-containing materials that aren't damaged or disturbed are not likely to pose a health risk. Generally, asbestos-containing materials that are in good condition and will not be disturbed (by renovation activities, for example) will not release asbestos fibers. Exposure typically occurs only when asbestos-containing materials are damaged in some way to release particles and fibers into the air.

While EHS advocates managing asbestos-containing materials in place if they are in good condition, per Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidelines, there may be situations where the removal or abatement of asbestos-containing materials is appropriate. Such situations may include when asbestos-containing materials are observed to be deteriorated or when planned renovation activities may impact the asbestos-containing materials.

Whenever abatement is necessary, such work will be conducted by an appropriately licensed remediation firm in accordance with all applicable local and federal regulations. A third-party independent industrial hygiene consultant provides oversight and air monitoring services for the duration of abatement projects in CUA facilities. Procedures are strictly followed to ensure occupant health and safety, including the full containment of asbestos work areas using airtight, physical barriers and negative pressure. Asbestos work areas are posted with clear signage, with entry limited to specially trained and licensed contractors.

Future planned renovation activities across campus may include such abatement activities, beginning this summer through the next academic year (June, 2017 through June, 2018). If the need arises, impacted occupants will be notified in advance with additional details such as planned materials to be removed, affected locations and estimated dates of such work.

Please contact EHS at extension 4461 with any questions or concerns. Interested parties may also find these references helpful for some additional general information:

The Environmental Protection Agency: <http://www2.epa.gov/asbestos>

The CUA EHS Manual: <http://ehs.cua.edu/manuals/environmental/8-22-AsbestosContMaterials.cfm>

The CUA Contractor Safety Guide: <http://ehs.cua.edu/manuals/contractor/asbestos.cfm>

Thank you very much.