



Asbestos Operations and Management (O&M)

If you operate a building built before 1980, you may have asbestos containing materials that must be managed. This may include floor tiles, mastic, pipe insulation, fittings on fiberglass insulated pipes, transite panels, roofing materials and others. If the building was built before 1973, there may be surfacing materials such as spray applied fireproofing, acoustical plaster and other friable materials. Many of these materials may be hidden or enclosed under carpet or above plaster or acoustic ceilings and not apparent to building occupants or contractors.

If asbestos material is managed in place in your facility, it is important to have an asbestos operations and management (O&M) program to prevent accidental exposures and to facilitate repairs, maintenance and renovations. Required aspects of an effective O&M program would include:

- Asbestos coordinator
- Asbestos survey and periodic evaluations
- Training and contractor awareness
- Planning renovations
- Recordkeeping

Asbestos Coordinator

The Asbestos Coordinator is the one person who manages all aspects of the asbestos program. This would include ensuring surveys are kept up to date, interfacing with building trades people such as plumbers, mechanics and custodial staff, and being involved in renovations that may impact asbestos. The Asbestos Coordinator would also arrange for abatement or repair of damaged asbestos materials and manage planned abatement projects.

Asbestos Survey and Periodic Evaluations

An asbestos survey is essential to identify and assess asbestos materials. The asbestos survey report is then a tool to use for the Operations and Maintenance program, hazard communication, coordinating with contractors, and planning renovations. The survey should identify all asbestos containing material including friable materials such as pipe insulation, fittings, tank insulation, fireproofing, acoustic plaster, and nonfriable materials such as floor tiles, mastic, transite panels, exterior siding, etc. Quantities and conditions of accessible asbestos materials should be determined, and the surveyor should note if there might be concealed asbestos materials above ceilings, in pipe chases, under carpets, etc. The asbestos materials should be reassessed on a regular basis to document changes and to enable the repair of minor damage.

Training and Contractor Awareness

The locations and conditions of asbestos materials should be communicated to facility maintenance and custodial staff, and to contractors who may work in the area of asbestos materials. Personnel should be able to recognize asbestos containing materials, know how to prevent exposure to themselves, and know what to do if damaged asbestos is discovered in the workplace. Custodial staff should be aware of procedures for maintaining asbestos containing flooring materials, cleaning small amounts of asbestos debris. Contractors should be informed if there are asbestos materials in their proposed work areas, even if their work will not intentionally disturb the asbestos materials. Awareness will help prevent damage and accidental exposures. The training can be conducted with a 2-hour Asbestos Awareness Training program as described in the OSHA asbestos standards.

Planning Renovations

Consideration of asbestos is an important aspect of planning mechanical or architectural renovations. Plan to remove asbestos before other demolition or construction occurs in the area. Be sure to have enough time in the schedule for the two-week advance notification to local, state, and federal authorities, the actual abatement, clearance sampling, and demobilization of the abatement contractor. The Asbestos Coordinator should update the survey to document the change in quantities of asbestos present after abatement projects.

Recordkeeping

In addition to the asbestos survey, the Asbestos Coordinator should keep thorough records of all asbestos work in the facility, including: designs of removal projects, abatement notifications and permits, records of abatement environmental quality assurance monitoring, training, air sampling and medical records for in-house staff, and waste disposal manifests.

For additional information or to discuss how an Asbestos O & M program will benefit you, please contact Dan Bruun, CIH, Vice President at 888.873.9983 ext 17, or at dbruun@1ssh.com.