

Chapter 27: [Asbestos](#)

Office Floor Tile Requirements

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URL: <http://www-group.slac.stanford.edu/esh/eshmanual/references/asbestosReqFloorTile.pdf>

1 Purpose

The purpose of these requirements is to ensure asbestos-containing floor tiles are properly maintained. They cover the identification of asbestos-containing tiles that may need to be replaced and the prevention of floor wear. They apply to workers, supervisors, and building and area managers in occupied areas with floor tiles that may contain asbestos.

2 Requirements

2.1 Hazard Identification

Asbestos-containing floor tiles and flooring may contain up to five percent asbestos. Such flooring must be maintained in good condition because asbestos fibers may become liberated when certain types of hard chair casters grind into the floor tiles during normal use. To determine whether a building is known to contain asbestos floor tiles, check the [Asbestos Inventory](#).

Note *The wear pattern made by office chair casters is usually a circular area under the chair where tiles appear dull, un-waxed, white, or grainy.*

Air sampling by SLAC industrial hygienists has demonstrated that asbestos dust from worn floor tiles is not entering worker breathing zones during office activities or during floor tile replacement. Nevertheless, any apparent wear must be reported to the building manager immediately for assistance in arresting a potential problem.

2.2 Managing Tile Wear

Wear caused by hard chair casters can be mitigated by

- Waxing floors once each year using a wet method adequately seals floor tile dust
- Choosing chair casters intended for wood floors are recommended because they are softer than those intended for carpet and decrease wear. (Such casters cost about \$25 for a set of five casters per chair.)

Building managers must contact the asbestos program manager whenever floor tile damage is observed or reported to identify appropriate controls, which may include

- Not dry sweeping worn tile areas (avoids the potential for getting dust in the air)
- Waxing the floor or worn area using a wet method

- Protecting the worn area with a hard plastic mat
- Rearranging the furniture to avoid further wear on worn floor tiles
- Replacing chair casters as appropriate; the asbestos program manager can help determine what type of caster is currently in place
- Replacing floor tiles worn by chair casters is not recommended unless the tiles are broken or cracked

Any hard casters identified as causing floor damage may not be salvaged for reuse on-site.

All workers must ensure their work area is accessible during the annual wet waxing.

3 Forms

None

4 Recordkeeping

None

5 References

[SLAC Environment, Safety, and Health Manual](#) (SLAC-I-720-0A29Z-001)

- [Chapter 27, “Asbestos”](#)
 - [Asbestos Inventory](#)