Chapter 27: Asbestos

Asbestos Flooring Requirements

1 Purpose

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

2 Requirements

2.1 Hazard Identification

Asbestos-containing flooring may contain 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 flooring, 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 flooring replacement. Nevertheless, any apparent wear must be reported to the building manager immediately for assistance in resolving potential problems.

2.2 Managing Flooring Wear

Wear caused by hard chair casters can be mitigated by

- Waxing floors once each year using a wet method adequately seals flooring dust
- Choosing chair casters intended for wood floors; recommended because they are softer than those intended for carpet and decrease wear

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

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

Rearranging the furniture to avoid further wear on worn flooring

Replacing chair casters as appropriate; the asbestos program manager can help determine what type of caster is currently in place

Replacing flooring worn by chair casters: not recommended unless the flooring is 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

The following forms and systems are required by these requirements:

- Asbestos Inventory. Database containing building-specific information on the presences of asbestos

4 Recordkeeping

The following recordkeeping requirements apply for these requirements:

- The asbestos program manager will maintain records of notifications of damaged asbestos flooring in the Asbestos Inventory.
- Documentation will be retained regarding asbestos flooring removal work done by SLAC employees.
- An annual report will be completed detailing the location and amount asbestos flooring removal and the workers who performed it.

5 References

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

- Chapter 27, “Asbestos”