FACT SHEET: Asbestos at Tulane
Awareness and Protection

Asbestos, a mineral known for its carcinogenic properties, comprises flexible fibers that possess resistance to heat, electricity and corrosion. These characteristics make asbestos valuable for various product applications, but also contribute to the risks associated with asbestos exposure. This Fact Sheet briefly reviews where asbestos is found at Tulane, how to identify it, and what its hazards are.

NEED TO KNOW:

- Tulane University is regulated under LAC 33:III Chapter 27 which encompasses the management of asbestos-containing materials in schools and state buildings.
- To comply with LAC 33:III Chapter 27, Tulane University is required to maintain Asbestos Management Plans (AMPs) to identify, manage, and control all known asbestos-containing materials.
- The AMPs are maintained by OEHS and require a visual assessment. Contact OEHS at **oehs@tulane.edu** if you would like to review the Asbestos Management Plan for your campus building.

MORE INFO:

WHERE IS ASBESTOS FOUND AT TULANE?

OEHS serves as the gatekeeper for all asbestos information for Tulane University and can address any questions or concerns that may come up regarding asbestos. Our campus consists of buildings with varying construction ages, and many building materials are suspected to contain asbestos. Suspect material should always be verified by OEHS personnel before disturbing. A few examples of materials on Tulane's campuses that may contain asbestos are: **pipes**, **tanks**, **boiler insulations**, **floor tiles and coverings**, **roofing materials**, **spray-on fireproofing**, **mastics**, **caulks**, and **ceiling tiles**. Also, many older laboratory and scientific equipment were often made from asbestos materials due to its heat-resistant properties. If heat was involved, there is a good chance that asbestos was invoved too.

HOW IS A MATERIAL IS IDENTIFIED TO CONTAIN ASBESTOS?

When planning a campus renovation, contact OEHS and a state-licensed asbestos building inspector will take a small piece of the suspect material and send it to a lab to be analyzed. Asbestos-containing materials contain greater than 1% asbestos (>1%) when identified by laboratory analysis. It is important to note that asbestos cannot be determined by visual inspection; only laboratory analysis can determine with certainty that asbestos is present in a suspect material.

ASBESTOS EXPOSURE HEALTH HAZARDS:

An ACM that is in good condition and left undisturbed is unlikely to present a health risk. The risks from asbestos occur when it is damaged or disturbed which enables asbestos fibers to become airborne.

- The asbestos fibers can then be inhaled without knowing and trapped in the lungs. If swallowed, they can become embedded into the digestive tract as well.
- Asbestos is a known human carcinogen and can cause chronic lung disease as well as lung and other cancers. Symptoms and/or cancer may take many years to develop following exposure.
- An effective asbestos management program minimizes any fiber releases, particularly when the materials are not significantly damaged and are not likely to be disturbed.
- Exposure to asbestos alone is not the single determining factor as to whether or not an individual will contract an asbestos-related illness or disease. Other factors include the dose (how much), the duration (how long), the fiber type (mineral form and size distribution), and type of contact with the ACM.
- Tulane OEHS is the administrator of the asbestos management plan for Tulane University and works closely with many campus departments, faculty, and staff to provide guidance to properly mitigate asbestos exposure hazards while on the campuses of Tulane University.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality: Asbestos
- OSHA: Asbestos Fact Sheet
- Tulane: Asbestos Fact Sheet

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