



Australian  
National  
University

# HAZARDOUS MATERIAL CONTAINMENT PROCESS

## Emergency Procedure for Asbestos (ACM)

### Work Instruction

QMS-FS-WIN-20-020 Revision 1 – 09/06/2022

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### Revision History and Approval

Rev.	Nature of changes	Approval	Date
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0	Approved	Kin Lin	03/07/2020
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## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide information to assist to respond and control a hazardous materials release during various emergency situations which involves Asbestos Containing Material (ACM).

## 2. Background

Asbestos is an ongoing risk to the ANU, and in particular, the health and safety of staff, students, visitors and contractors. ACMs are present in a substantial proportion of buildings in the ANU due to widespread use prior to the imposition of a ban in 2003. If identified, undisturbed and kept in good condition, ACMs do not pose a significant risk to health. However, asbestos fibres may become airborne if ACMs are damaged, and exposure to these fibres can cause a number of serious diseases such as asbestosis and mesothelioma.

## 3. Unexpected disturbance of know ACM

1. Works should cease immediately and the area where the suspect material is located should be vacated and access into the area restricted (warning signage will be required). Restrict access to the area by locking or cordoning off the area until a full assessment has been completed.
2. If present, shut down the air conditioning system.
3. If works is on any university building or building service, it must be reported to the F&S Maintenance Team on (02) 6125 7943. The F&S Maintenance Team will attend site and determine an appropriate course of action. Afterhours please contact ANU Security on (02) 6125 2249.
4. Any actions that exposes, or disturbs suspected or known ACM must be reported to the Work Environment Group (WEG) and Person with Management or Control of a Workplace (PMCW). The ANU online WHS Incident Notification record must be completed.
5. The material will be treated as containing asbestos until confirmed otherwise through a NATA accredited laboratory analysis. A risk assessment will be completed immediately or as soon as reasonably practical and:
  - a. The area will remain isolated from contact until the analysis is returned; and
  - b. All workers will continue to be isolated from the area of concern; and
  - c. A general communication to the affected workplace will be made by the F&S Maintenance Team via the Work Environment Group.
6. Engage an ACT licensed asbestos assessor (LAA) to assess the immediate risk posed by the asbestos material and recommend remedial actions.
7. The regulator should be notified if it is assessed by the LAA that there has been a potential asbestos exposure.
8. Air monitoring will be undertaken to assess airborne fibre levels within and adjacent the work area (useful to provide data for staff working in the area at the time of the material disturbance).

9. A licensed asbestos removalist should be engaged to undertake removal or remediation of the material. The licensed asbestos assessor, F&S and removalist should discuss and agree on the requirements for methodology for removal/remediation work including air monitoring and set up requirements.

The asbestos removalist must provide an asbestos removal control plan (ARCP) to the LAA for approval prior to commencement of asbestos removal or asbestos remediation works.

10. On completion of the removal/remediation works and satisfactory clearance provided by the LAA (including clearance monitoring as required), the work area may be safely accessed, and work may recommence.
11. If the substance is confirmed to be ACM a clearance inspection and certificate is required prior to the immediate area of concern being de-isolated and suitable for workers re-occupation of a building or facility. Clearance inspections must be carried out by an LAA independent from the asbestos removalist.
12. F&S and the local area will ensure that all asbestos related incidents:
  - a. Are reported into the Workplace safety incident and hazard reporting tool (FIGTREE) as an incident or near miss;
  - b. Are investigated in accordance with the ANU Work Health and Safety Incident Management procedure and the F&S Hazardous Materials Management Manual;
  - c. Have control measures reviewed before the activity is conducted again; and
  - d. Have corrective action(s) implemented to prevent a recurrence.
13. Where the asbestos material has not been removed, the materials should be labelled, and works should not be undertaken immediately adjacent the material which are likely to disturb the ACM.
14. All relevant aspects of the event should be recorded in the appropriate asbestos register, management plan and records.
15. The location and details of all assumed, confirmed ACM or confirmed non-ACM, along with reports, photographs, plans showing the location, will be included in an updated hazardous materials registers.

#### **4. Unexpected Asbestos finds**

In the event that suspect ACM is identified or uncovered on site the following process should be observed:

1. Works should cease immediately and the area where the suspect material is located should be vacated and access into the area restricted (warning signage may be required).
2. Engage an LAA to inspect the material to assess the immediate risk posed by the material. The material may also require sampling if there is any doubt regarding whether or not the material contains asbestos. Asbestos sample analysis must be undertaken by a NATA (National Association of Testing Authorities, Australia) accredited laboratory.

3. WEG and the regulator should be notified if it is assessed by the LAA that there has been a potential asbestos exposure. The ANU online WHS Incident Notification record must be completed.
4. If the material is sampled and analysed and found to be non-asbestos, then works and access within the area may recommence without any controls required in relation to asbestos.
5. If the material contains asbestos and the LAA recommends that the material does not pose an exposure risk, a barrier between the material and work area should be set up and works and access within the work area may recommence.
6. If the material contains asbestos and the LAA determines that the material has been disturbed to a level where it poses an asbestos exposure risk, access into the work area should remain restricted. Air monitoring maybe undertaken to assess airborne fibre levels within and adjacent the work area (useful to provide data for staff working in the area at the time of the material disturbance).
7. Following completion of any reassurance air monitoring, a licensed asbestos removalist should be engaged to undertake removal or remediation of the material. The LAA, F&S and removalist should discuss and agree on the requirements for asbestos removal methodology including air monitoring and set up requirements.
8. On completion of the removal/remediation works and satisfactory clearance by the LAA (including clearance monitoring as required), the work area may be safely accessed, and work may recommence.
9. A clearance inspection of the removal of ACM must be carried out prior to re-occupation of a building or facility. Clearance inspections must be carried out by a LAA independent from the asbestos removalist and a Clearance Certificate supplied.
10. Where the asbestos material has not been removed, the materials should be labelled, and works should not be undertaken immediately adjacent the material which are likely to disturb the material.
11. All relevant aspects of the event should be recorded in the appropriate asbestos register, management plan and records.
12. The location and details of all assumed, confirmed ACM or confirmed non-ACM, along with reports, photographs, plans showing the location, will be included in an updated hazardous materials registers.

## **5. Emergency work in areas involving Asbestos**

1. If emergency works are required which may disturb ACM, the following will be required, all requirements for asbestos removal should be observed including:
  - a. Notification requirements

Note: Any actions that exposes, or disturbs suspected or known ACM must be reported to the Work Environment Group (WEG) and Person with Management or Control of a Workplace (PMCW). The ANU online WHS Incident Notification record must be completed.

- b. PPE requirements
  - c. Asbestos removal controls and monitoring (ARCP produced by the Asbestos Removalist and approved by an LAA)
  - d. Safe Work Methods
  - e. Suitable equipment for the job
  - f. Clearance inspection (and monitoring as required) by LAA on completion of works
  - g. All other requirements for licensed asbestos removal work as detailed in the ANU Hazardous Materials Management Manual, WHS Regulation and Asbestos Removal Code of Practice.
2. In the event of any situation where material, either ACM or assumed ACM is damaged, the immediate area will be isolated until sufficient measures are in place to control any potential emission or exposure to airborne asbestos fibres.
  3. University workers shall not carry out collection of asbestos debris. This material should only be removed by a licensed asbestos removalist.
  4. In an emergency situation, where the potential for emission of or exposure to airborne fibres cannot be sufficiently controlled, the licence holder may carry out removal work immediately in the following limited circumstances:
    - a. A sudden expected event that may lead to a situation where there is a risk of exposure, for example a burst pipe that was lagged with asbestos or a forklift crashing into an asbestos cement sheet wall; or
    - b. An unexpected breakdown of an essential service that requires immediate rectification, for example gas, water, sewerage or telecommunications services.
  5. If this is the case, the licensed asbestos removalist must notify the regulator immediately by telephone and in writing within 24 hours after the notice provided over the telephone.
  6. All of the event should be recorded in the appropriate asbestos register, management plan and records.

## **6. Reference documents for further directions & information**

ANU Procedure: Safe Management of Asbestos and Synthetic Mineral Fibres.

F&S Hazardous Materials Management Manual