

JSC Safety and Health Handbook	JPR No.	1700.1K
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Chapter 5.7 Asbestos in the Workplace

This could be you . . .

A worker may have released asbestos fibers while drilling through some floor tile to install bolts. No one sampled the tile ahead of time, and it was later found that the tile contained asbestos. The worker took no measures to prevent asbestos exposure. The work area had to be decontaminated, which delayed the job.

An office employee may have released asbestos fibers when he climbed into a drop ceiling on a ladder to run a cable from a computer to a printer across the room. The area above the ceiling contained asbestos, and entry into the ceiling space was a Class III asbestos activity. The worker wasn't trained in asbestos control techniques, and wasn't using the proper personal protective equipment (respirator and disposable Tyvek clothing) and other items (ground cover, barricades, and warning signs). The asbestos spill response team had to be called out to clean up the area.

5.7.1 Applicability of this chapter

You are required to follow this chapter if you work at JSC, even if you don't do any asbestos work. If you work at White Sands Test Facility (WSTF), you follow WSTF requirements that meet the intent of this chapter.

5.7.2 What this chapter covers

This chapter provides you basic information on asbestos in your work area and on what you need to do to avoid exposing yourself to it. Many JSC buildings contain asbestos. Even if you don't work in one of them, you will visit one occasionally. If you work with asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) or in areas with asbestos, this chapter is only a starting point. You shall follow other requirements such as those found in Part 12 of this Handbook.

5.7.3 JSC's policy about asbestos

JSC's policy is to maintain currently existing ACMs in place and to use procedures that will prevent the release of ACM and prevent exposures to workers and building occupants. JSC will remove or abate ACM as necessary to protect the health of all employees. JSC shall follow all federal, state, and local regulations and guidelines that apply to control any hazards with asbestos on JSC property.

5.7.4 How to know if your building contains asbestos

You will see a sign at each entrance to your building informing you of the presence of asbestos in the building. You can check the Asbestos Locations Database on the JSC Health Homepage at (<https://sashare.sp.jsc.nasa.gov/sd/SD3/SitePages/Occupational%20Health/Asbestos.aspx>) . You can also ask your facility manager, supervisor, or the Occupational Health Branch at x36726 to determine whether your building contains asbestos.

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5.7.5 What you need to know about asbestos in JSC buildings

5.7.5.1 If you work in an office and don't disturb building materials, there are a few things you still need to know:

- a. Asbestos may commonly be found in spray-applied insulation (SAI), ceiling acoustical decoration, ceiling tiles, thermal system (pipe) insulation, floor tiles and sheet flooring, sheetrock/wallboard, mastics, and roofing and siding materials.
- b. Installed asbestos products aren't hazardous as long as they remain in good condition and you don't disturb them and release fibers.
- c. You shall never do anything to damage building materials or create dust.
- d. Many JSC buildings have asbestos-containing SAI above suspended ceilings. It is a fluffy beige material. Don't disturb ceiling tiles or go into the ceiling in a building that has SAI unless you have met all the requirements to conduct asbestos activities.
- e. If you find SAI or any beige fluffy insulation that has fallen from the ceiling, it may contain asbestos. Call the Occupational Health Branch at x36726 to assess the situation and the JSC Emergency Dispatch Center at x33333 or (281) 483-3333 to request the asbestos spill response team. Never attempt to clean it up yourself.
- f. Many buildings also have ceiling tiles that contain asbestos. Some buildings have attached ceiling tiles to the walls. Never disturb or touch a ceiling tile or a wall in any building unless you know that it doesn't contain asbestos.
- g. If a material is falling from the ceiling and you think or know it is an ACM, notify any coworkers in the immediate area and leave. Then call the Occupational Health Branch at x36726.
- h. You shall never enter an asbestos work area (such as an Asbestos Regulated Area) established with barriers or enclosures and warning signs, unless you have met all the requirements in Part 12 of this Handbook for working with ACMs.
- i. If you are a custodial worker, see paragraph 5.7.11 of this chapter for training requirements.

5.7.6 Prohibited activities

5.7.6.1 To reduce the chance for exposure to asbestos, all uncontrolled activities that may damage ACM or cause the release of airborne fibers are prohibited. You shall never:

- a. Cut or drill holes in any ACM.
- b. Install hangers or fasteners in any ACM.
- c. Sand or grind any ACM, including floor tile that contains asbestos.
- d. Damage ACM while moving equipment or furniture.
- e. Install curtains, drapes, or dividers in such a manner that they will damage ACM.
- f. Sweep or use compressed air to clean up ACM. Use only a vacuum equipped with a high-efficiency particulate air filter.
- g. Disturb or remove ceiling tiles without following the procedures in Part 12 of this Handbook .

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h. Damage any pipe or mechanical system insulation that contains or could contain asbestos. Materials such as Styrofoam, foam rubber, foam glass, and fiberglass don't contain asbestos. However, asbestos-containing mud may exist at the joints and fittings. If in doubt, contact the Occupational Health Branch (x36726) or the Asbestos Program Manager (APM) before conducting activities that may disturb or damage these materials, or follow the job performance requirement in Part 12 of this Handbook.

5.7.7 If you are planning any operations, maintenance, or construction

See Part 12 of this Handbook if you are planning any work that could disturb ACM.

5.7.8 If your work could expose you to asbestos

Follow Part 12 of this Handbook for any work involving ACM.

5.7.9 If you will control or manage ACM

If you supervise personnel or oversee contracts engaged in activities that involve controlling or managing ACM, you shall ensure that those whom you oversee follow the requirements detailed in Part 12 of this Handbook. Call the APM or the Occupational Health Officer if you have questions about these requirements. This includes developing work plans and specifications for the job.

5.7.10 If you fail to follow asbestos requirements

Any failure to adhere to this chapter or the procedures in Part 12 of this Handbook will be reported to the supervisor in charge or a contract official and to the APM. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

5.7.11 Training to work with ACM or in asbestos areas

Before you are assigned to do any work that could disturb asbestos, a "competent person," as defined by OSHA and Part 12 of this Handbook, shall certify that you have met all requirements. The following table tells you what training you need to have for your particular job.

<i>If you . . .</i>	<i>Then you shall have training in . . .</i>
Work in a building that contains asbestos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact that your building has asbestos • How to recognize ACMs • What to do if you suspect an asbestos release in your work area
Are a custodial worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying asbestos in the JSC workplace • What to do and who to call if you suspect that you have found asbestos debris • Proper methods for housekeeping in areas with asbestos • Caring for floor materials that contain asbestos • The procedures detailed in Part 12 of this Handbook

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Do any work that could disturb asbestos

- The specific class of asbestos work you will be doing as detailed in Part 12 of this Handbook
- How to use a respirator, which includes a fit test and medical surveillance

Are a "competent person" as defined by OSHA

- The subjects required by OSHA to be a "competent person"
 - The procedures detailed in Part 12 of this Handbook
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