Asbestos Updates—Mike Warren Reports

Custodial workers will be receiving a refresher course on Asbestos Awareness in March. We have had a few incidents that indicate some reminders would be helpful to everyone in preventing those 'near misses'. This new course is being developed now to cover specific areas that should be helpful in day to day duties. The class will be given by Mike Warren to individual crews and will be a brief review of history, uses and health effects of asbestos with the majority of time spent on locations of asbestos in the crew's buildings, approved work techniques, identifying and preventing problems, and detailed emergency response actions.

Speaking of 'near misses' there have been a few in the Shops recently that could have easily been prevented by better communication. Trained Asbestos Workers need to remember that anytime they are manipulating asbestos in any way they need to contact the Asbestos Shop and start a Project Log. It is important to do so to make sure our bases are all covered with worker eligibility, respiratory protection, work practices, reporting, and air monitoring requirements. EVERY time we do any sort of asbestos work we are required to establish a Regulated Area, no matter how small the project or how well other requirements are met.

Asbestos Containing Materials have been found in two new areas.

Concrete Filler

The renovation at Willard Hall and asbestos inspections supporting it have disclosed a thin layer of asbestos containing material on the concrete ceilings. The material was probably applied to fill small holes in the concrete to improve appearance. It was applied before the original painting and is not much thicker than a coat of paint. While it causes no particular problem in day to day use of the rooms it will have to be considered if it will be disturbed during renovations.

The discovery of this material has led to further investigations of other buildings and a similar asbestos containing filler has also been found on the concrete ceilings in Ackert Hall. There may be others, further investigation is underway.

Ceiling Tiles

For the very first time asbestos has been found in Main Campus ceiling tiles. During the routine renovation inspection at the Environmental Research Laboratory offices in Seaton Hall the ceiling tiles returned positive results for asbestos. All of the rooms in Suite 201 have these tiles and while they are not an issue in this project it is worth noting the location for future maintenance and repair operations. Also noted in the same areas the partition walls are covered with Transite (asbestos containing cement sheets) so apparently the designer of the rooms was working with fire prevention in mind!

We encourage EVERYBODY to think before disturbing any building materials they are not sure are asbestos free, and if unsure of asbestos content ASK before making dust!
It has been reported that several Facilities vehicles have broken seat belts. Please report damaged seat belts to your supervisor. It is the supervisor's responsibility to contact the motor pool for repair. Questions contact the Safety Office. Be Safe!