

# CHAPTER 25

## ASBESTOS AWARENESS

### INTRODUCTION

It is the policy of HTS AmeriTek that employees shall not disturb asbestos containing materials (ACM). This policy sets forth requirements for identifying ACM and informing all personnel at HTS AmeriTek worksites of ACM. Through proper identification and communication, HTS AmeriTek intends to prevent its employees from having casual exposure to airborne asbestos fibers.

### PURPOSE

This policy is intended to comply with OSHA 29 CFR 1910.1001(j), *Asbestos—Communication of Hazards to Employees*. This policy is not intended to address safety and health management practices for asbestos abatement activities or projects.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

The HTS AmeriTek site representative is responsible for:

- Assuring that worksites are properly evaluated for asbestos fibers complying with EPA and OSHA asbestos inspection regulations, and
- Communicating to site employees and other contractors the location of asbestos containing materials (ACM).

Site employees and contractors are responsible for:

- Informing the host facility of any material that may have not been properly evaluated for asbestos fibers,
- Informing of location of asbestos containing materials (ACM),
- Demarcating or marking ACM at the worksite, and
- Assuring that job procedures and work activities do not disturb ACM.

### ASBESTOS HEALTH HAZARDS

If fibers of asbestos<sup>1</sup> are inhaled, they can cause disabling respiratory diseases (asbestosis) and various types of cancers (lung cancer, mesothelioma, and cancer of the stomach and colon). Symptoms of mesothelioma include shortness of breath, pain in the walls of the chest, and/or abdominal pain. Inhalation or ingestion of asbestos fibers from contaminated clothing can also cause these diseases. Asbestos-related diseases often have a latency period where illness symptoms do not appear for 20 or more years after initial exposure.

### ASBESTOS CONTAINING MATERIALS (ACM)

An asbestos containing material (ACM) is a material containing more than 1% asbestos. Materials in buildings constructed on or before 1980 must be considered as presumed asbestos containing materials (PACM) unless proven otherwise by either 1) material safety data sheets, or 2) an EPA-accredited asbestos inspection. This inspection can only be performed by an EPA-accredited inspector adhering to the asbestos inspection standard, 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 763.

All materials at HTS AmeriTek worksites must be evaluated for containing asbestos fibers. Materials include but not limited to building materials, process materials, process equipment materials and parts, and vehicle parts. Materials that are either identified as ACM or PACM shall be labeled, and hazard communication (asbestos awareness training) shall be immediately performed with all personnel working at the site.

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<sup>1</sup> Asbestos defines a group of naturally occurring minerals composed of hydrated silicates crystalline in structure, occurring as parallel bundles of fibers. Classifications of asbestos include chrysotile, amosite, crocidolite, anthophyllite, tremolite, and actinolite.

## **LABELING OF ACM AND PACM**

All ACM and PACM must be immediately labeled with yellow warning signs or labels stating, “Asbestos—Cancer and Lung Hazard—Do Not Disturb.”

## **ASBESTOS AWARENESS TRAINING**

Before working at a site containing ACM or PACM or immediately after determination of ACM or PACM, personnel shall be informed of location of all ACM and PACM and control methods for preventing exposure to airborne asbestos fibers. The Site Supervisor shall be responsible for providing this training.

### CONTENT OF ASBESTOS AWARENESS TRAINING.

The asbestos awareness training program shall consist of the following items:

- Health hazards of airborne asbestos fibers,
- Location of all asbestos containing materials (ACM) or presumed asbestos containing materials (PACM),
- Labeling of ACM and PACM,
- Disturbance of ACM and PACM is strictly prohibited. A disturbance activity is any physical or mechanical action that may cause creation of airborne asbestos fibers. These activities may consist but not limited to cutting, grinding, pounding, pressing, striking, or scrubbing on the ACM or PACM. Compressed air may also be considered a disturbance activity.
- Response to a disturbance event; immediately leave the area and report the event to the site supervisor.
- Hazard communication to visitors and contractors.

### DOCUMENTATION OF ASBESTOS AWARENESS TRAINING

The site supervisor or authorized instructor shall document all asbestos awareness training. Documentation shall include topics of discussion including location of ACM and PACM, names and signatures of trainees, name and signature of instructor/site supervisor, and dates. Documentation shall be maintained for 30 years.

### REFRESHER TRAINING

Refresher training shall be performed when:

- Additional ACM or PACM has been identified,
- Changes occur to ACM or PACM, e.g. deterioration, removal, etc., or
- Personnel have been observed performing disturbance activities on ACM.

## **CONTRACTORS’ COMPLIANCE TO ASBESTOS AWARENESS POLICY**

Before contractors are permitted to work at RRS sites, the Site Supervisor must inform contractor supervisors of location of ACM and PACM. Contractors must inform the HTS AmeriTek Site Supervisor of all job activities to be performed near to ACM and PACM; activities must not disturb the ACM or PACM.

Contractor supervisors must perform asbestos awareness training with their employees before commencing work. Training shall consist of the minimal program items listed in Section 6 above. Contractors shall have and implement an asbestos awareness policy that is as stringent as this policy.

## **POLICY REVISIONS**

This policy shall be revised when deficiencies are observed, changes occur in OSHA or EPA standards, or more effective controls are discovered. The asbestos awareness policy shall be monitored and changes made when unsafe practices are observed or when new and improved technologies emerge.

## **REFERENCES:**

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 29 CFR 1910.1001(j), *Asbestos—Communication of Hazards to Employees.*

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 40 CFR Part 763, *AHERA—Inspections of Asbestos Containing Materials.*