

# UAB

## Working In Asbestos Contaminated Areas

### A. Purpose

This procedure is intended to be utilized by anyone working above ceiling in a building owned or operated by UAB. The intent of these procedures is to protect not only the health and well fare of its employees but also building occupants and visitors.

### B. Site Preparation

1. It is suggested that if practical work above ceiling in an asbestos contaminated area be conducted after hours or at times when the area is least occupied.
2. Above ceiling work can utilize any method of isolation that is practical, i.e., portable containment systems, zip poles, stick built, or polyethylene curtains. However, all must have the following:
  - a. Polyethylene floor to catch debris
  - b. Double flap entry curtain
  - c. Polyethylene walls from ceiling to containment bottom
  - d. Walls that attach or are pressed to the existing ceiling grid to form seal
3. Place a piece of polyethylene on floor beneath the work area leaving extra lengths on all sides of the containment footprint. This is to ensure any debris which may get outside of the containment is captured. This polyethylene will be folded inward and disposed of as asbestos waste upon completion of the job.
4. Set up the containment over the ceiling tiles to be removed or over the first tile if unit is to be moved during the project.
5. Don PPE and obtain all necessary tools, ladder, light, and extension cord before removing any ceiling tile.
6. Lift ceiling tile sliding to the side. Do not remove tile unless it is damaged.
7. Conduct work and replace tile.
8. Clean inside of containment of any debris that may have fallen during activities above ceiling.
9. Clean tools ladder or any other equipment by wet wiping before handing them outside containment.

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10. Remove containment from ceiling, fold-inward and bag.
11. Fold in floor polyethylene inward and bag.
12. Perform desired decontamination method as outlined below.

### C. Worker Protection

#### PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Personnel should wear appropriate respirators and protective clothing at all times when entering or working in contaminated areas. Minimal acceptable respirators are half-mask, air purifying respirators equipped with high-efficiency filters. Protective clothing should include full-body coveralls, head coverings, and shoe coverings. The coveralls should be made of materials which are impervious to asbestos fibers.

#### PROTECTIVE PROCEDURES

Before entering posted, contaminated areas, employees should:

1. Put on two layers of the prescribed protective coveralls, closing the openings of the outer layer at the wrists and ankles with tape.
2. Put on the prescribed head and foot coverings, ensuring that all clothing is covered.
3. Put on the assigned respirator according to respirator training instructions. A negative pressure test should be conducted to ensure for a proper fit. In accordance with 29 CFR 1910.134.
4. The protective equipment should not be removed for any reason while in the contaminated area. It should be noted that wearing this equipment in warm temperatures and/or high humidity may result in heat stress conditions.

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5. Upon leaving contaminated areas, employees should remove the outer layer of protective clothing just inside the entrance to the area and the inner layer after leaving the contaminated area. The clothing should be immediately placed into a labeled, impermeable plastic bag. The employee should continue to wear the respirator until the protective clothing has been removed and sealed in the plastic bag.
6. The respirator should be removed and placed in a labeled impermeable bag. The bag should be sealed and the respirator returned cleaned and sanitized.
7. Immediately after removing protective clothing and respirators, the employee should thoroughly wash all exposed skin with soap and water.
8. Bags containing contaminated clothing and/or material should be disposed of in authorized disposal sites in accordance with local regulations.
9. Employees should not eat, drink or smoke while in contaminated area or until after they have removed all protective equipment and washed. Food, beverages, and tobacco products should not be taken into a contaminated area.
10. If employee clothing should become contaminated with asbestos-bearing material, it should be removed as soon as possible and placed in a labeled, impermeable plastic bag. The bag should be sealed and sent to a laundry facility for washing. The employee should shower immediately after removing contaminated clothing.
11. Any spillage of asbestos material should be removed by a HEPA filtered vacuum cleaner. A regular type vacuum cleaner or broom should never be used for clean up. This work should only be performed by individuals who have completed a asbestos awareness and control training sessions.
12. In some cases, it may be necessary to "contain" the area while work above the ceiling is performed. The Occupational Health and Safety Department should be consulted if there are questions regarding this decision. This work should only be performed by individuals who have completed the fourteen hour operation and maintenance training sessions.

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**The following three decontamination procedures are intended for workers who are required to work in asbestos contaminated areas or who have conducted small scale clean up of asbestos debris.**

**Outer protective clothing should be decontaminated using any of the following methods.**

### **Worker Decontamination Using the WET METHOD**

- A. Decontamination should be done in areas that are free from unprotected employees, asbestos debris, and never in the path of direct ventilation.
- B. Standing on a layer of polyethylene use water to gently mist (with a garden sprayer, spray bottle, or in a shower) the outside of clothing, face, respirator, and hair to lock down any loose fibers. This may require a co-employee assistance to ensure the employee's back is also wet.
- C. After employee is adequately wet gently remove clothing slowly turning arm sleeves and pants legs inside out during the process.
- D. While standing on the disposable clothing, decontaminate soles and boots. Roll clothing in a bundle and dispose of in an approved disposal bag.
- E. Remove respirator and place in a plastic bag for cleaning.

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### Employee Decontamination Using the HEPA VACUUM METHOD

- A. Decontamination should be done in areas that are free from unprotected employees, asbestos debris, and never in the path of direct ventilation.
- B. Gently vacuum (using only an approved HEPA vacuum) the outside of clothing, face, respirator, and hair to lock down any loose fibers. **USE CAUTION NOT TO VACUUM TOO CLOSE TO EARS OR EYES, THIS COULD RESULT IN SERIOUS INJURY.** This may require a co-employee assistance to ensure the employee's back has been thoroughly vacuumed.
- C. Once vacuuming has been completed, employee should gently remove clothing slowly turning arm sleeves and pants legs inside out during the process.
- D. While standing on the disposable clothing, decontaminate soles and boots. Roll clothing in a bundle and dispose of in an approved disposal bag.
- E. Remove respirator and place in a plastic bag for cleaning.

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### Employee Decontamination Using the RE-SUIT METHOD

(This method should be used when working inside an area where disposable clothing will be ripped and torn because of tight working conditions. Employees will don their old clothing or scrubs provided by UAB.)

- A. Decontamination should be done in areas that are free from unprotected employees, asbestos debris, and never in the path of direct ventilation.
- B. Immediately after leaving the contaminated area put a new disposable suite over the contaminated clothing and proceed to an isolated area suitable for decontamination. (An isolated area or a shower would be ideal). Be sure to have your personal change of clothing available.
- C. Standing on a layer of polyethylene use water to gently mist (using a garden sprayer or spray bottle) the outside of clothing, face, respirator, and hair to lock down any loose fibers. This may require assistance from a co-employee to ensure the employee's back is also wet.
- D. After employee is adequately wet gently remove clothing slowly turning arm sleeves and pants legs inside out during the process.
- E. While standing on the disposable clothing, decontaminate soles and boots. Roll clothing in a bundle and dispose of in an approved disposal bag.
- F. Remove respirator and place in a plastic bag for cleaning.