



**THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY**
WASHINGTON, DC

Responsible University Official: Senior Associate Vice President for Safety and Security

Responsible Office: Division of Safety and Security/HEMS

Last Revised Date: September 27, 2017

MERCURY, ASBESTOS & LEAD-BASED MATERIALS

Policy Statement

Mercury, Asbestos and lead based materials have been determined to be a health hazard to the general public and dangerous when not properly used or confined. This Policy is to ensure compliance with applicable federal, state and local laws regarding the use or presence of mercury, asbestos and lead-based materials in university buildings.

Reason for Policy

To prevent harmful exposure to mercury, asbestos, and lead-based materials by promoting awareness and maintaining procedures for university community members in the identification, and proper management, containment and disposal of these materials in accordance with federal, state and local regulations.

Who is Governed by this Policy

Faculty, staff, students and contractors

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Policy

Suspected Mercury, Asbestos, and Lead-Based Materials Hazards

Members of the university community who observe or suspect the presence of mercury, asbestos, or lead-based materials in a university building should not disturb the material. The material should be reported to Health & Emergency Management Services at 202-994-4347. Health & Emergency Management Services will coordinate inspection of the suspected material, and any necessary actions.

Mercury, Asbestos, and Lead-Based Materials in Work Areas

Before undertaking any projects of repair, renovation or construction in a suspected area that may impact or disturb mercury, asbestos, or lead-based materials; a survey must be arranged by contacting Health & Emergency Management Services, to determine if materials are present in the planned work area.

University staff members who oversee a project or related work are responsible for informing contractors of the locations of suspected or known material prior to the commencement of any work. Contractors are responsible for providing their employees, and requiring any subcontractors to provide their employees, the appropriate amount of training, personal protective equipment, and licenses required by applicable regulations.

If any suspect materials are encountered, the staff member or contractor will immediately stop work and notify Health & Emergency Management Services. In the event of confirmed materials, necessary precautions must be taken immediately to minimize the exposure of these materials to the university community.

All materials must be disposed of in a manner consistent with applicable federal, state, and local regulations.

Definitions

Asbestos	A naturally occurring fibrous mineral, historically used in thermal system insulation, fire doors, plaster, floor and ceiling tiles, and adhesives and mastics.
ACM	Asbestos Containing Material. Any material containing greater than one-percent asbestos.

Lead-Based Paint

The District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Virginia define lead-based paint (LBP) as paint or other surface coating that contains greater than 0.50% lead by weight or equal to or greater than 1.0 milligrams of lead per square centimeter.

The State of Maryland defines LBP as paint or other surface coating that contains greater than 0.50% lead by weight or greater than 0.7 milligrams of lead per square centimeter.

Definitions of LBP may vary in other jurisdictions.

Mercury-Containing Lamps

All fluorescent and high-intensity-discharge lights, bulbs, tubes, and lamps on campus. The mercury contained in these lamps is in vapor form and is extremely harmful to humans and the environment.

This policy also covers **mercury based thermometers** which are no longer in use by the university. In the event someone comes across a mercury based thermometer notify Health and Emergency Management Services for proper disposal.

Related Information

[Health & Emergency Management Services](#)

[Environmental Protection Agency](#)

[Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\) regulations, 40 C.F.R. § 273](#)

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Asbestos Standards ([29 CFR 1926.1101](#) and [29 CFR 1910.1001](#))

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (40 CFR 61 Subpart M)

[District of Columbia Control of Asbestos \(20 DCMR Section 800\)](#)

[Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#)

[Environmental Protection Agency](#)

[District Department of the Environment: All About Lead](#)

[29 CFR 1910.1025](#) (Lead in General Industry)

[29 CFR 1926.62](#) (Lead in Construction)

[Environmental Protection Agency](#)

[Occupational Safety & Health Administration](#)

Contacts

Contact	Telephone	Email
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Health & Emergency Management Services	(202) 994-4347	safety@gwu.edu
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Document History

- **Last Reviewed Date:** February 14, 2017
- **Last Revised Date:** February 14, 2017
- **Policy Origination Date:** February 1996

Who Approved This Policy

Louis H. Katz, Executive Vice President and Treasurer

This policy, as well as all [university policies](#), are located on the [Office of Compliance and Privacy's](#) home page.