

Responsibilities of Local Education Agencies for Asbestos in Schools

Introduction

Local education agencies* (LEAs) must safeguard children from airborne asbestos fibers in schools. This brochure provides a brief summary of an LEA's responsibilities for asbestos inspections, reinspections, abatement projects, non-friable floor tile removal, management plans and record keeping in schools.

Responsibilities of the LEA

Illinois' Asbestos Abatement Act and Code requires a designated person in each LEA to oversee all asbestos management plan activities. This person must receive adequate training, as required by the federal Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), about asbestos and its various uses and forms and about the health effects associated with asbestos exposure. He or she also must know the locations of asbestos-containing building material (ACBM) identified in school buildings and recognize deterioration and delamination of ACBM. The person also should be aware of the availability and location of the school's management plan and have knowledge of upcoming renovation projects to determine if they will impact asbestos-containing materials (ACM).

Each LEA shall ensure the following:

1. Anyone who conducts any inspections, reinspections or abatement projects; develops or updates management plans; or performs operations and maintenance that will disturb ACM are licensed asbestos professionals.
2. All custodial and maintenance staff have received two-hour asbestos awareness training and 14 hours of operations and maintenance training as described in AHERA.
3. The parents, teachers and employee organizations are notified on an annual basis of all inspections, response actions and periodic surveillance that are planned or in progress in regard to asbestos in each school building.
4. Short-term workers (e.g., telephone repair workers, utility workers or exterminators) are informed of the locations of ACBM in school buildings.
5. Warning signs are posted immediately adjacent to ACM in routine maintenance areas that state, "Danger. Asbestos. Hazardous. Do Not Disturb Without Proper Training and Equipment."
6. Parents, teachers and employee organizations are notified in writing on an annual basis of the availability of the school's asbestos management plan.
7. The management plans are available for inspection in each school and the district office.

8. Records are properly maintained.
9. Each management plan contains a statement, signed by the designated person, that certifies the LEA's responsibilities have been or will be met. The statement needs to be amended for each new designated person chosen by the LEA and notification of such changes sent to the Illinois Department of Public Health on the "Assurance Form" (available from IDPH).
10. Reinspections are conducted at least once every three years after a management plan is in effect and the school reinspection form is sent to the Department within 30 days after the inspection.

Record Keeping Requirements of the LEA

The LEA is required to ensure that appropriate records are kept for each activity that may disturb asbestos. These activities include periodic surveillance, cleaning, operations and maintenance activities, major response actions and fiber release episodes. The records must be kept in the building's management plan. An identical copy of the management plan must be maintained in the school office and the district office. The management plans must be maintained for the life of the building.

For each homogeneous area (where a substance is uniform in structure and composition) undergoing ACM removal, the LEA is required to ensure that records are retained for six years after completion of the project.

A complete set of asbestos rules can be viewed [here](#) or by contacting –

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Asbestos Program
525 W. Jefferson St.
Springfield, IL 62761-0001
217-782-3517
TTY (hearing impaired use only) 800-547-0466

* LEAs include (1) any local education agency as defined in Section 198 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 USC 3381), (2) the owner of any nonpublic, nonprofit elementary or secondary school building, or (3) the governing authority of any school operated under the Defense Dependents' Education System provided for under the U.S. Defense Department's Education Act of 1978 (20 USC 921, et seq.).