



## SAFETY TOOLBOX TRAINING –GUIDELINES FOR STRIPPING ASBESTOS-CONTAINING FLOORING

### SUPERVISOR INSTRUCTIONS:

- Use toolbox trainings to spark safety discussions during monthly meetings with employees
- Submit the employee sign-in sheet to your designated administrative assistant /training coordinator as a record of training

Improperly removing asbestos-containing floor coverings could result in the release of asbestos fibers. The Environmental Protection Agency recommends that you leave asbestos-containing floor coverings in place, provided the material is in good condition. However, proper maintenance procedures, such as those outlined below, should always be followed. The following guidelines are based on Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Interim Guidelines for Stripping Asbestos-Containing Floors.



### EPA Interim Guidelines for Stripping Asbestos-Containing Floors:

1. **Minimize Stripping of Floors.** Stripping of floors should be done as infrequently as possible (once or twice or less per year depending on circumstances). The frequency should be carefully considered as floor maintenance schedules or contracts are written or renewed.
2. **Properly Train Staff.** Custodial or maintenance staff that strip floors should be trained to operate properly and safely the machines, pads, and floor care chemicals used at the facility.
3. **Follow Appropriate Work Practices.** Custodial or maintenance staff that strip floors should follow appropriate work practices, such as those recommended here, under informed supervision. Directions from floor tile and floor wax product manufacturers on proper maintenance procedures should be consulted.
4. **Strip Floors While Wet.** The floor should be kept adequately wet during the stripping operation. **DO NOT** perform dry stripping. Prior to machine operation, an emulsion of chemical stripper in water is commonly applied to the floor with a mop to soften the wax or finish coat. After stripping and before application of the new wax, the floor should be thoroughly cleaned, while wet.
5. **Run Machine at Slow Speed.** If the machine used to remove the wax or finish coat has variable speeds, it should be run at slow speed (UNDER 300 rpm) during the stripping operation.
6. **Select the Least Abrasive Pad Possible.** The EPA recommends that the machine be equipped with the least abrasive pad possible to strip wax or finish coat from asbestos-containing flooring. **DO NOT** operate a floor machine with an abrasive pad on unwaxed or unfinished floors.
7. **Do Not Over-Strip Floors.** Stop stripping when the old surface coat is removed. Over-stripping can damage the flooring and may cause the release of asbestos fibers.
8. **Do Not Sand Asbestos-Containing Flooring Material.** Sanding of asbestos-containing flooring material is prohibited.
9. **Contact the Environmental Health and Safety Office (EHSO) at (404) 727-5922.** If you have any questions about asbestos-containing materials located in Emory University buildings, inform your supervisor and contact EHSO.

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### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. True or False. Floor machines used to remove the wax from asbestos-containing flooring should be operated at slow speed (under 300 rpm).  
**Answer:** True
2. True or False. To prevent over-stripping of flooring, you should stop stripping when the old surface coat has been removed.  
**Answer:** True
3. True or False. Over-stripping of asbestos-containing floors may cause the release of asbestos fibers.  
**Answer:** True.
4. What type of stripping should be done on asbestos-containing flooring?
  - a. Wet stripping
  - b. Dry stripping
  - c. It doesn't matter**Answer:** A. Wet stripping
5. Who should you contact if you have any questions regarding asbestos-containing materials in Emory University buildings?
  - a. President Wagner
  - b. Employee Health Services
  - c. EHSO**Answer:** C. EHSO



**REMEMBER: HINDSIGHT EXPLAINS THE INJURY THAT FORESIGHT WOULD HAVE PREVENTED!**

#### PHOTO CREDITS

Buffing Machine. Retrieved from:

<http://www.realpages.com/sites/officepros/services-janitorial-cleaning.html>

Kids w/ Safety Sign. Retrieved from:

<http://www.ncpc.org/resources/enhancement-assets/clipart-and-stock-art/iStock-000005163219XSmall.jpg/view>