

# Preventing Asbestos Exposure and Protecting Floor Tiles



The University is involved in a variety of activities to control asbestos hazards on campus. The University has conducted surveys to identify areas where ACM is present and manages ACM in place.

If you suspect a material in your work area may be ACM or PACM and it appears damaged, contact EH&S at 206.543.7262, or the Facilities Services Regulated Materials Management Office at 206.685.3357.

You can help prevent the potential of asbestos exposure to yourself and others by observing the following practices:

- Immediately report damaged ceilings, walls, pipe insulation, floor tiles, or other building materials to your supervisor or building coordinator.
- Request an asbestos survey prior to the start of a project that may involve disturbing asbestos containing material (ACM) or presumed asbestos containing material (PACM).
- If there has not been an asbestos survey conducted then all materials are considered PACM and treated as asbestos until otherwise confirmed as non-asbestos.
- Be careful not to damage building materials and surfaces that may contain asbestos. For example, do not:
  1. Pound in nails to hang pictures.
  2. Put hooks in ceilings for plants.
  3. Install wall-hung shelving.
  4. Pull up carpeting that is glued down.
- Do not enter construction areas.
- Do not enter [restricted access areas](#).

## Protecting Floor Tiles

Keep your office space and lab area looking nice by protecting your floors. Resilient floor tiles can contain low percentages of asbestos, bound into a matrix that reduces the potential for release of fibers. Some of the floor tiles are over 80 years old, a testament to their durability. Over time however, the wear and tear on floors by rolling or sliding chairs and moving furniture or equipment can damage these floor tiles. Damaged tiles can release particles that may include asbestos fibers.

To prevent floor tile damage, EH&S and Facilities Services request that departments purchase floor mats to protect resilient floor coverings from chair casters. If your floor tile or sheeting already shows signs of wear, contact Facilities Services or your building maintenance unit to assess the condition. They can determine if the floor covering contains asbestos and the best way to clean, refinish or repair it. EH&S works with facilities departments to evaluate and control any potential risk from asbestos containing materials.