Asbestos is a fibrous rock mined in Canada, Russia, S. Africa, and other places. When processed, asbestos breaks into tiny fibers that were added to many building products throughout the 1900s because it had many good properties, like resistance to fire and chemicals.

Asbestos becomes dangerous when the product sheds fibers that can be breathed. Most products that contain asbestos are considered safe as long as they are in good condition and are not damaged. Asbestos-containing products can shed fibers when they are damaged or friable.*

Asbestos Containing Materials in GOOD condition:
- Steam Pipes
- Ceiling Tiles
- Acoustical Plaster
- Floor Tiles

Asbestos Containing Materials in BAD condition:
- Asbestos warning signs are required in mechanical rooms or areas that contain asbestos. Signage is posted to inform of potential asbestos hazards and not to disturb the materials.

Asbestos & Disease - The inhalation of asbestos fibers by workers can cause serious disease of the lungs and other organs that may not appear until years after the exposure has occurred. Asbestos can cause the buildup of scar-like tissue in the lungs and result in loss of lung function that often progresses to disability and death. Smokers are at higher risk of developing some asbestos-related diseases.
Care of asbestos floors:

**Stripping**
- As infrequently as possible
- During unoccupied times
- Use finish removers/stripping agents
- Strip wet using least abrasive pad possible
- Speed: 175-190 RPMs
- Thoroughly rinse after removing finish

**Finishing**
- Where possible, apply a sealant
- Apply several coats
  - Allow each coat to fully cure before next application

**Spray Buffing/Burnishing**
- Only with sufficient floor finish and low speeds

**Other Housekeeping Issues:**

- Use wet methods on Asbestos Containing Materials surfaces

**What should I do if I discover damaged asbestos?**

Do not clean up fallen ceiling tiles or broken floor tiles.
Speak with building managers if you have any questions about suspect materials.

- Contact your supervisor, facilities manager/building manager with questions or concerns.
- For more information, please contact EHSEM

**Emergencies:**
- Contact the Operations Center - 5-5560
- Wash with soap & water
- Leave contaminated clothing in area
- File an incident report

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