

March 22, 2017

Dear Colleagues,

I'm forwarding the most recent update received from Scott Mabury this afternoon.

Trevor

This message is being sent on behalf of Scott Mabury, Vice-President, University Operations

Please ensure that this is distributed to all MSB faculty, staff and students in your unit, as before.

Dear Faculty, Staff and Students in MSB,

I am sending this notice as part of a commitment by the university and by Faculty of Medicine Dean Trevor Young to keep you informed of information we receive related to testing in connection to our asbestos abatement plan at the Medical Sciences Building (MSB).

Following the discovery of asbestos fibres in dust in the support room to a lab on the sixth floor of the Medical Sciences Building (MSB., the lab (6360) and two adjoining rooms were closed and will remain so until it is confirmed whether or not a safety risk exists; air samples taken in the room yesterday (March 21, 2017) were this afternoon confirmed to be within acceptable limits. Further tests are being conducted to determine the source of the dust.

This latest case involves a lab that was beside an abatement site and was the first lab to be closed in early February because of a positive asbestos dust sample. The lab was closed at that time and safely cleared in accordance with U of T's asbestos management policies and procedures. All air samples taken in this lab since abatement work began nearby have been below accepted levels, consistent with all other air tests in the building to date.

We are undertaking a number of actions as a result of this latest finding to investigate the cause and prevent future occurrences, including air and smoke tests at this site. We are also increasing monitoring and air samples at other sites in the building where positive dust samples have been found in the past.

Asbestos is most dangerous when it is airborne and inhaled at high exposure levels over long periods of time. The university has conducted air quality tests in the building since work to upgrade MSB laboratory space began this fall. Expanded air quality tests across MSB by a third-party environmental consultant began earlier this month, and as of this morning, the over 200 tests conducted to date have also ALL come back negative for asbestos; air sampling will continue.

The Ministry of Labour (MOL) inspector was onsite today at 1pm; this was their second visit pertaining to this project. Both MOL field visit reports provided thus far indicate no non-compliances to date. At this time, we have not been provided with any directives regarding our current processes and procedures.

All reports related to ongoing asbestos and air quality testing in MSB are being posted by the University's Environmental Health & Safety office. Access is available by emailing your UTORID to ehs.office@utoronto.ca, with Access request re: MSB reports portal in the subject line. The results also are reported to the MSB Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) and will be posted on their safety board. The JHSC will continue to be engaged throughout this process.

Current MSB construction is part of a major renovation under the Lab Innovation for Toronto (LIFT) project. Asbestos remediation for this stage of construction is now complete.

Kind regards,
Scott Mabury
Vice-President University Operations