Burton-Conner Reopening Committee
August 4, 2022
Burton-Conner Project Scope

The Burton-Conner renewal project will improve the building’s infrastructure and refresh the interior spaces to improve the student experience. The scope of this targeted renovation project preserves much of the existing structure, including walls, floors, and ceilings.

The infrastructure renewal includes:

- Renovated plumbing and heating systems, refreshed kitchens with new appliances, renovated suite bathrooms and improvements to existing public restrooms, new energy-efficient windows
- Life safety improvements, accessibility upgrades, improvements to building facade and amenities, and new corridors that will connect the Burton and Conner sides of the residence on floors 2-5.
Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral fiber used extensively in building materials from the 1930s until the 1970s.

- Present in many buildings built prior to 1980.
- More than 200 million americans live in homes with ACM (more than half the country).
- Found in materials such as:
  - pipe insulation
  - drywall joint compound
  - floor tiles
  - ceiling tiles
  - gasket materials
  - fire door fill
  - boiler insulation

Although it is still used in a limited number of products, Asbestos Containing Materials are generally no longer used for new building construction because asbestos fibers have been associated with certain specific adverse health effects.
ACM Risks & Management

- The inhalation of asbestos increases the risk of cancer; asbestos fibers are therefore hazardous when airborne and respirable. **Intact and undisturbed Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs) pose negligible health risks** because they do not release asbestos fibers into the air.

- The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) recommends providing **comprehensive and effective management of intact ACMs in place** rather than total removal.

- In accordance with this DEP regulation, ACMs at MIT that are in good condition are left in place and monitored.

- MIT follows the regulatory guidance and best practices for asbestos removal for ACMs in poor condition and/or impacted by renovation work.

Guidance on the MassDEP website

**Good Advice**

If asbestos-containing material is in good condition, the best thing you can do is leave it alone.
A building assessment established that the only accessible ACMs currently in Burton-Conner are in the drywall joint compound, which is less than 2% asbestos. When combined with the drywall (which does not contain asbestos), the asbestos in walls is less than 0.25% by weight.

Intact joint compound does not release fibers into the air and therefore poses a negligible risk of asbestos exposure.

- In areas of the building where walls were being taken down or reconfigured during renovation, MIT followed the regulatory guidance and best practices for asbestos removal.
  - This included properly containing the area where the work was being done and disposing of the materials in accordance with regulatory requirements.

- Walls that were found to be intact and in good condition were left undisturbed.
  - This approach is consistent with the safety and abatement recommendations from MassDEP and other regulatory agencies, as well as MIT in-house experts.
  - This approach is also followed by other institutes of higher education.
MIT’s approach to ACM management is driven by the priority to maintain healthy and safe environments for our community and informed by regulatory compliance. Air sample testing and visual inspections are conducted to confirm the spaces are safe for occupancy.

**Testing**

- In accordance with regulation, the areas are cleared for occupancy following abatement activities.
- As part of the abatement of Burton-Conner, 1952 air samples were collected and evaluated for their asbestos content.
- All samples were below the abatement clearance threshold of 0.01 fiber per cubic centimeter, and well below the OSHA/ACGIH threshold of 0.1 fiber per cubic centimeter.

**Visual inspections**

- All surfaces within the renewal area were inspected for visible debris prior to the construction work. This informed the scope of abatement work.
- Final inspections were conducted inside containment areas prior to the final air clearance sampling.
What if there is damage to building materials, such as damage to walls or ceilings?

1. **DO NOT** try to clean the material up or further disturb the area.

2. Promptly report damage to the House Operations Manager or dial (617) 253-1500 to speak with “Unit 12” House Operations.

3. If you come into contact with a damaged wall, carefully remove and bag affected clothing. **DO NOT** place items in washing machines. Consult with MIT Environment, Health & Safety (EHS) on next steps.
Resident Communications & Outreach

Housing & Residential Services, in collaboration with the MIT Environment, Health & Safety Office and other campus partners, regularly communicates with campus residents regarding health and safety information. Below please find details regarding how ACM-specific information is being incorporated within upcoming communications:

- **August 4, 2022**
  - Conversation with Burton-Conner Reopening Committee

- **Early August**
  - Install back-of-door informational flyers with building resource information, including information about ACMs, on all suite doors.
  - Update ACM section of the MIT Environment, Health & Safety website, finalize ACM one-pager with information and resources.
  - Disseminate ACM protocol document and continue to train staff working within residential buildings on how to manage and report ACM concerns.

- **Mid-August**
  - Post AV images & posters within on-campus residence halls, RE: residential security, fire safety, and ACM awareness.

- **Early September**
  - Include ACM awareness information within resident welcome messages (i.e. House Operations Manager message).

- **Going Forward**
  - Include ACM awareness information within annual welcome & safety communications, regular staff trainings.

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ACM One-Pager: This document will be published and available on the EHS website & linked within ACM-related communications.

What is Asbestos?
Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral fiber used extensively in building materials from the 1930s through the 1970s. Asbestos is present in many buildings built prior to 1980. It is estimated that about 200 million Americans live in houses that contain asbestos. Asbestos may be found in materials such as pipe insulation, drywall joint compound, floor tiles, ceiling tiles, gasket materials, fire door kit, and boiler insulation. While generally not used in new building construction now, asbestos is an integrated part of more than three thousand products and can still be purchased over the counter today.

Risks + Management
We now know that inhaled asbestos that is disturbed in building materials can present serious health and safety concerns. When properly managed, undamaged Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs) in buildings do not release fibers into the air and therefore pose negligible health and safety risks. For intact or undisturbed ACMs, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) recommends providing comprehensive and effective management of materials in place rather than total removal. In accordance with this DEP regulation, ACMs at MIT that are in good condition are left in place and monitored.

Safety Reminders
- **DO NOT** install screws, pins, nails, or hangers or do damage to ceilings or walls.
- **ONLY** use easily-removable mounting strips or putty when hanging items on the wall.
- For fire safety reasons, please remember campus residents **CANNOT** cover more than 40x40 inches of room walls or more than 1/3 of doors with decorations. Ceilings cannot be decorated.
- Always promptly report any observed damage to building materials.

Resources + Contact
Learn more about MIT’s approach to asbestos management, and find informational resources, on the EHS website.

If a concern arises, please contact your House Operations Manager promptly or dial House Operations “Unit 12” at (617) 253-1500.

Be Smart, Be Safe
What if there is damage to building materials, such as damage to walls or ceilings?

1. **DO NOT** try to clean the material up or further disturb the area.
2. Promptly report damage to the House Operations Manager or dial (617) 253-1500 to speak with “Unit 12” House Operations.
3. If you come into contact with a damaged wall, carefully remove and bag affected clothing. **DO NOT** place items in washing machines. Consult with MIT Environment, Health & Safety (EHS) on next steps.

Remember
Asbestos contained in intact, solid materials poses a negligible risk of exposure. **DO NOT** remove, cut, drill, sand, grind, or otherwise disturb any building materials, as it is possible that the materials may contain asbestos.
Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs)

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral fiber used extensively in building materials from the 1930s through the 1970s. Asbestos is present in many buildings built prior to 1980.

We now know that inhaled asbestos that is disturbed in building materials can present serious health and safety concerns. When properly managed, undamaged Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs) in buildings do not release fibers into the air and therefore pose negligible health and safety risks.

Safety First

- Do not install screws, pins, nails, or hangers or do damage to ceilings or walls.
- Only use easily-removable mounting strips or putty when hanging items on the walls.
- Promptly report any observed damage to building materials to your House Operations Manager or contact House Operations "Unit 12" at (617) 253-1500.

EHS Website: Content regarding asbestos will be updated to include additional information and resources for members of the MIT community.

ACM AV Image/Poster: Safety information regarding ACMs will be posted on AV screens along with other building safety information.
Going forward, MIT will continue to promote awareness about ACMs and undertake proper ACM management by:

- Continuing to follow recommended ACM management practices;
- Continuing to provide ongoing maintenance staff trainings about proper ACM management within buildings; custodial staff are trained to identify and report any visible damage to ensure appropriate response and repair; AND
- Disseminating ACM educational information to campus residents, as well as publishing resources on the EHS website.