

North Campus clearance

Asbestos and hazardous substances update

May 2022



North Campus asbestos survey

www.mecd.manchester.ac.uk



Asbestos – key facts

Asbestos is only a health risk if it is disturbed and fibres are released

Never disturb an item unless you know it does not contain asbestos

Please remain vigilant for ACMs – seek advice and report any suspected ACMs

Further information and useful background information can be found on Safety Services guidance at

<https://www.healthandsafety.manchester.ac.uk/toolkits/equipment/asbestos/>

North Campus asbestos survey - background

To ensure compliance with disposal regulations, the MECD Moves and Clearance teams commissioned an external partner to carry out an extensive survey of all drawers, cupboards and small items of equipment across all North Campus technical spaces which are scheduled to close this year.

Work has now been completed in these technical spaces, with further work ongoing around unmanaged spaces across North Campus (those which don't belong to specific departments) but this will not affect normal laboratory operations or laboratory / workshop closure processes for those due to move in the coming weeks.

Reporting – what if I find suspected ACMs?

For any suspected ACM, these items must be left in the location they're found in and reported to the Moves Team via MECDmoves@manchester.ac.uk and our Safety Team via fse.safety@manchester.ac.uk.

Please put an A4 paper sign on the item or drawer/cupboard it's located in, make sure others using the area are aware and restrict access until the item has been checked and the removal, cleaning and air monitoring process has been completed.

For further information, the [Asbestos awareness eLearning course](#) is available via StaffNet.

Reporting – what we've found so far



Surveys have identified textile wrapped clamps, gaskets and other small items. These have been safely removed and areas cleaned by specialists. Air monitoring results showed no residual asbestos.

Ovens, furnaces, water baths, old analytical equipment and even fire doors have been identified and safely removed.



Removal, cleaning and air monitoring process



Identified Textile Sleeve



Identified Textile Sleeve



Sealed Item



Removed Item



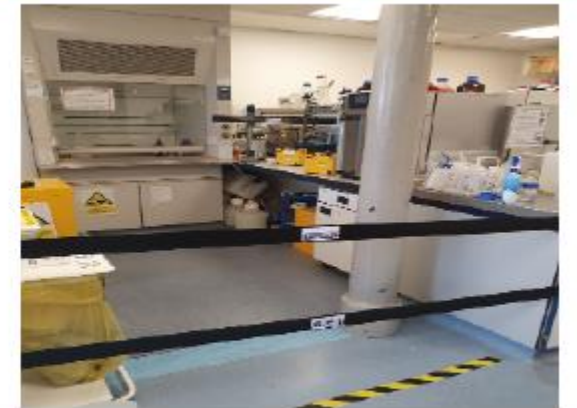
Environmental Clean



Environmental Clean



Reassurance Air Monitoring - DQ000100



Exclusion Zone Reassurance air monitoring
- DQ000096 / DQ000097

What happens next?

- Equipment suspected of containing ACMs is bagged/enclosed and taken to licenced asbestos disposal sites to be destroyed.
- If you see any bags in your area that are awaiting collection (right) for disposal please leave them in place.
- The Estates Asbestos Management team receive air monitoring results usually within 24 hours and results are shared out with area users and department SSAs via the Clearance team.



Legacy hazardous substances



Legacy hazardous substances - background

Prior to the closure of North Campus, all legacy hazardous substances must be cleared from the space and disposed of via the University and departmental procedures. These substances can not move over to the new home of Engineering and Materials with other laboratory equipment.

Hazardous substances which fall into the legacy category include but are not limited to:

- those whose containers have deteriorated and may lead to spillages and exposure;
- Radioactive chemicals;
- Substances that may be a biohazard
- Mercury (including thermometers)
- Energetic or pyrophoric reagents.



Reporting – what if I find legacy hazardous substances?

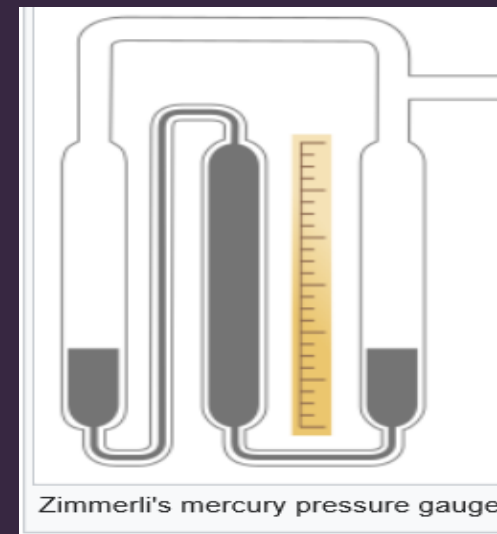
Please check all areas of your laboratory, as well as any associated areas (e.g. office, communal areas, store cupboards) as well as any shared storage (e.g. filing cabinets, bookshelves, storage boxes) for any legacy hazardous substances. You should also check any cabinets, desiccators and fridge/freezers in these areas.

If you discover any radioactive, pyrophoric or unstable chemicals, substances which may be a biohazard or any substances whose container is damaged, please do not move these and report this to MECDmoves@manchester.ac.uk as soon as possible.



A reminder about Mercury

Mercury vapour and most compounds of mercury, are toxic to the human nervous system and act as cumulative poisons. Use of mercury should be avoided and steps taken to replace or phase out its' use. The University encourages the replacement of mercury thermometers and pressure gauges with less hazardous versions e.g. alcohol thermometers.



Mercury spills

Legacy mercury spills and those from broken mercury thermometers should always be cordoned off and the spill cleaned up promptly using sulphur flowers/mercury specific spill kits. The waste collected must be disposed of as hazardous waste following local procedures.

Mercury vapours are heavier than air and may linger in higher concentrations at the site of the spill. Contact your technical team and safety office before attempting to clean-up any mercury spills or remove any mercury containing equipment.

[Access the Safety services guidance around Mercury spills here](#)