

ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION UPDATE

DATE: September 2025
TO: All Employees & Residents of Benton-Stearns Education District
FROM: Benton-Stearns Education District
SUBJECT: Status of Asbestos in School Buildings

As a result of the federal law AHERA (Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act), all primary and secondary schools were required to develop and implement a plan for managing all building materials which contain asbestos. Included in the Act is the requirement to notify all parents, guardians and staff members as well as organizations representing them of activities and events occurring annually.

Asbestos has been used in many building materials due to outstanding insulating and strengthening properties. When it is undisturbed or intact, it poses little hazard to human health. It is only when damage has or may occur that the quality of the school's management program becomes an issue.

In 1988, all buildings owned, leased or under the control of the Benton-Stearns Education District were inspected by EPA accredited inspectors, with building material samples analyzed by an independent laboratory. Based on the inspections, the Benton-Stearns Education District prepared and the State approved a comprehensive management plan for administering the asbestos located within its buildings safely and responsibly.

Federal law requires a periodic walk-through (called "periodic surveillance") every six months of each area containing asbestos. This process is carried out in the Benton-Stearns building during January and July each year. Also, the law requires that all buildings be re-inspected three years after a management plan is in effect. This process is carried out in the Benton-Stearns District. The asbestos projects completed in the school district have been accomplished by working with IEA, 9201 West Broadway, Brooklyn Park, MN 56401 and through contracts with certified outside vendors.

Short-term contractors (outside contractors; i.e. telephone repair workers, electricians, etc.) must be provided information regarding the location of asbestos in which they may come into contact. All short-term workers shall contact the Building Program Supervisor before commencing work and be given this information. All outside contractors must receive written proof that they have been notified.

The school has an individual Asbestos Management Plan which contains a list of the location(s), type(s) of asbestos-bearing materials found in that school building and a description and time table for the abatement of each. The school district master Asbestos Management Plan, which includes information about asbestos-containing materials in all district buildings, is available for public review at the Voyager Building Office, 324 3rd AVE S, Sauk Rapids, MN 56379.

Copies are available at 25 cents per page. Questions related to the plan should be directed to Ken Kraemer, Director of Buildings and Grounds at (320) 291-4338.

Benton-Stearns Education District is in full compliance with AHERA. It is the policy of Benton-Stearns Education District to maintain a safe and healthy environment for our students and staff members. This shall be accomplished by strict enforcement of the policies regarding asbestos by the Asbestos Program Manager and school officials.