



October 30, 2017

Asbestos Questions & Answers

1. What is Asbestos?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring fibrous mineral that has been mined throughout the world and added to thousands of construction products such as insulation around pipes, texture paints, floors and ceiling tiles. Many of these construction materials have been used in buildings including schools.

2. Why is it an issue?

Asbestos fibres, if inhaled, can cause serious lung diseases, including lung cancer. The disease symptoms generally appear more than 15 years after prolonged inhalation of asbestos fibres. Therefore, it is important to identify those asbestos-containing materials (ACMs), their potential to release fibres (friability) and remove or cover friable asbestos when necessary. This will ensure that small fibres capable of being inhaled are not released into the air during normal use of the building and are controlled when ACMs are disturbed during construction and/or renovations.

3. Does the TDSB remove asbestos while children are at school?

The TDSB limits the removal of asbestos to times when students, staff and other building occupants are not in the building. Generally this means after hours on weekends or extended vacation periods.

4. What regulations govern the management of asbestos in schools during normal occupancy and renovations?

[Ont. Reg. 278/05](#), under the Occupational Health & Safety Act:

- requires building owners to carry out periodic surveys of ACMs;
- requires they have an Asbestos Management Program (AMP) in place;
- provides strict procedural requirements to protect workers and building occupants by containing the spread of dust and asbestos fibres whenever ACMs are disturbed because of renovation, construction and/or maintenance activities.

5. Where can I find the Asbestos Management Program (AMP) for my child's school?

It can be found at the main office.



6. Is there asbestos in JFJPS? How is Asbestos managed by the TDSB?

Yes. Asbestos is present within JFJPS. Many, if not most buildings in Toronto (including private residences), have some form of asbestos-containing building materials.

Asbestos surveys have been routinely conducted throughout the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) since the late 1980s to comply with provincial regulations and to proactively manage asbestos in our schools.

A survey conducted at JFJPS in March 2017 showed asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) were in good condition. It also included an assessment of the condition of ACMs to determine the likelihood of asbestos fibres to become displaced and pose an inhalation hazard (friable and/or in poor condition).

The TDSB has an Asbestos Management Program (AMP) in place, required by a provincial regulation that governs how the TDSB manages ACMs in all of its schools. The purpose of the AMP is to establish procedures to prevent disturbance of ACMs and outline the procedures that must be followed if ACMs are damaged and/or are likely to be disturbed. In addition, it requires to periodically review and assess the condition of ACMs in the building. The TDSB rigorously adheres to the AMP.

7. Is the TDSB in compliance with those regulations?

Yes. The TDSB is in full compliance with the regulations in relation to JFJPS.

8. What prompted the recent asbestos removal?

The TDSB commissioned an independent risk assessment to determine the potential impact of building a 35-storey tower next to the school. This assessment revealed that although ACMs at JFJPS were in good condition and didn't pose an inhalation hazard under the normal use of the school, there was a low potential risk that asbestos fibres could become displaced during project activities involving higher vibration. In addition, the risk assessment report recommended that windows in some classrooms be changed and air-conditioners be installed, and that ACMs that are likely to be impacted by these events be removed prior to the start of the project.

9. What was exactly done?

A detailed "Pre-Construction" survey was undertaken by Environmental Consulting Occupational Health (ECOH), an independent consultant, to identify and locate all designated substances (asbestos is one of the 11 designated substances) regulated under Ont. Reg. 405/09 and other hazardous substances (e.g. mould and PCBs) commonly found in buildings such as JFJPS. Based on the findings of this survey, all ACMs that had the potential to release fibres due to the various causes outlined in the risk assessment report were removed. The removal was carried out under the strict supervision of ECOH and the school was cleared for occupancy based on visual assessment and air sampling.

Currently, there are only a few inaccessible areas that have friable ACMs. Asbestos in these areas was not removed because it is enclosed (e.g. pipe chases, shafts).



10. Will my child be at risk of exposure to asbestos during and/or after the construction of the tower next door?

All exposed areas containing friable asbestos have been remediated; therefore, there is no risk of asbestos exposure to your child during and/or after the construction of the tower next door.

11. Other resources:

[Occupational Health & Safety Act](#)

[O. Reg. 278/05: Designated substance](#)

