



May 2022

Dear BISD Employee:

On October 22, 1986, President Reagan signed the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response ACT (AHERA) into law. The Act directed the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop regulations creating a comprehensive framework for addressing asbestos hazards in schools.

Asbestos is a mineral found in certain types of rock formation. When mined and processed, it takes the form of small fibers that are usually invisible to the naked eye. Asbestos became a popular product throughout the building industry because of its unusual combinations of qualities--it is strong, will not burn, resists corrosion and insulates well. Asbestos is usually referred to in two forms. Friable asbestos--that is, asbestos material that can be crumbled by hand pressure, and non-friable--asbestos material that cannot be crumbled by hand pressure.

The Act required all public and private elementary and secondary schools to conduct inspections for asbestos containing building materials, develop management plans, and implement response actions in a timely fashion. Birdville Independent School District removed the identified sprayed or trowel-on friable asbestos containing surfacing material in 1987 and 1988 from all BISD buildings. The District completed the required AHERA inspection, and prepared a management plan for the asbestos in each facility. The management plan identifies the location and type of asbestos in your facility. These plans were filed with the Texas Department of Health in October of 1988. A copy of the management plan is maintained in the central office of your building and is available for review at any time during the business day. The master AHERA plan is available for review at the Facilities Management Office at 6119 East Belknap. The asbestos found in BISD buildings is non-friable, meaning it cannot be crushed with the fingers and easily reducing it to powder.

Asbestos fibers can cause health problems. They can, if inhaled, disrupt the normal functioning of the lungs. Exposure to asbestos fibers has been linked to several diseases, including asbestosis, lung cancer, and mesothelioma. Since these diseases typically do not develop immediately after inhalation of asbestos fibers, it may be 15-40 years or more before symptoms become apparent.

In effort to ensure the safety of yourself and others in the building, we request your help with following the guidelines below:

1. Before attempting anything that would disrupt the surface or interior of walls, ceilings or floors, verify in the AHERA management plan whether or not the site contains asbestos. If after checking, you are unclear, notify the building principal or the Facilities Management Office before beginning any work.
2. Do not drill or crush asbestos products identified in the management plans for your facility.

3. In the event you notice a change in the condition of any asbestos-containing materials, notify your principal, custodian, or the Facilities Management office.
4. In the event of an emergency that might involve asbestos, remove yourself and students from the area, secure the area, and notify the principal.

Fortunately, most asbestos-containing materials can be safely and properly managed in place. Asbestos that is maintained in good condition poses no risk of exposure to students and school employees. AHERA rarely requires the removal of asbestos containing materials. However, when asbestos becomes damaged, appropriate response action must be implemented. BISD has contracted with accredited companies to resolve any asbestos situation that might occur. District personnel conduct periodic surveillances every six (6) months in all facilities containing asbestos materials. Every three years, as per the AHERA regulations, an inspection is performed by accredited and licensed consultants in all facilities containing asbestos materials. The most recent re-inspection was completed in January 2022.

AHERA also requires a school district to annually inform employees and building occupants (or their legal guardians), of the presence of asbestos in their building.

Hazardous friable asbestos that was easily accessible in district facilities has been removed from our buildings. We manage remaining asbestos-containing materials in-place. The AHERA management plan for your building is located on-site. Contact your principal or facility administrator for the plan's location. Additional questions can be addressed to the Facilities Management office at 817/547-5858.

Sincerely,  
John Hughes, AHERA Designated Person  
Director, Facilities Management