

Building Update: Evaluation of Regulated Materials

Planning a major capital renovation and expansion is an exciting time, and a very busy time for many people. While a lot of information about new ideas and new possibilities will be shared among members of the congregation this spring, there is also information about the current buildings that is important to share with everyone who uses them: members, staff, and renters.

An important element of studying a building for renovation or expansion is to evaluate the existing materials for quality and concerns. A part of that testing is a comprehensive regulated materials study, for which UUC contracted with SoundEarth Strategies in late 2015. This study is intended to be used in the planning and costing of future plans, and it must also be used to direct maintenance and continuing operation of the buildings for its current programming and occupants.

Because these studies did confirm that there are asbestos-containing materials and lead-bearing materials in the original 1957 church building (the sanctuary and social hall, main floor and ground floor), it is important that everyone who occupies the building is made aware of the presence and condition of these materials during ongoing use, and that they understand how the operating procedures of the church are focused on maintaining a safe and healthy environment.

NOTE: At this time, the impact of regulated materials on the cost of renovation or demolition of any part of the existing building is not fully estimated. Members should be assured that it will be a factor in all related decisions during the current facilities planning and design process.

Presence of Materials

The following table from the materials study report summarizes the location and nature of the regulated materials in question.

Regulated Material	Material Description	Location
Asbestos-containing materials	White surfacing and gray stucco	Chapel, west walls
	Joint compound	Throughout the 1957 Building
	Black mastic	Perimeter around the 1957 Building floor vents
	Sink undercoat	Kitchen sink
	Fibrous sheet vinyl backing and associated mastic	Kitchen
	Fibrous backing material and associated mastic	1957 Building stair treads
	Fibrous sheet vinyl backing and associated mastic	1957 Building Lower Floor hallway
	Beige tile and black mastic	Frazer Room
	Thermal system insulation pipe insulation	1957 Building, above women's bathroom and within the basement

Regulated Material	Material Description	Location
Lead-bearing materials	Interior painted surfaces and ceramic tiles	Throughout the 1957 Building
	Exterior painted surfaces	1957 Building and the 1986 Addition
	Five leaded vent tubes	Roof, 1957 Building

Condition of Materials

The regulated materials in question are largely contained and not in areas of direct contact with people using the church (for example, mastic materials underneath solid flooring surfaces, layers of paint underneath multiple layers of newer paint, or solid materials such as ceramic tiles). By continuing to leave these materials undisturbed, risk of exposure can be essentially reduced to near zero.

In late December 2015, SoundEarth Strategies made a separate and comprehensive study of air in the church to confirm that no regulated materials were airborne. The results of the test stated:

“Based on the information gathered during this air monitoring event, the ACMs identified in the Survey are not currently contributing detectable concentrations of asbestos to the indoor air and pose a low risk to the building occupants.”

Given this result, occupants of the church may be reassured that there is no active hazard to occupying the spaces containing these regulated materials as long as appropriate maintenance and operating guidelines are followed. Note that standard procedures require that this airborne contaminant testing be performed every year while the building remains in operation before complete removal of the materials can be effected. Results of these regular tests will be shared with all occupants of the building.

Maintenance and Operating Procedures

Continuing to operate in a facility with the presence of regulated materials is fairly straightforward. The major points are these:

- Allowed use of the building by members, staff, and renters is unchanged based on the findings of the study and tests. The only requirement placed on general users of the building is that surfaces identified with regulated materials not be disturbed.
- Maintenance procedures for staff and custodians will prohibit modifying or attempting any kind of repairs or maintenance that involve surfaces with regulated materials.
- Any form of maintenance or repairs that must disturb regulated materials will be performed by licensed and bonded abatement contractors for localized removal of those materials before proceeding. Such work will be scheduled and widely announced well in advance so that minimal disruption of church use or rental activities are required.

The primary contact regarding all issues related to the presence, testing, or maintenance of regulated materials at University Unitarian Church is Byron Krystad, Director of Operations. You may contact him by calling **206-454-7723** or emailing **byron.krystad@uuchurch.org**.