



To: FMS Section Chief  
Engineering Manager  
Facility Operations Manager  
SEIU President

From: Brenda Streeter  
Occupational Health and Safety Manager  
Albany VAMC

Signature

Re: Crawlspace entry without respiratory protection

Date: November 10, 2016

A survey conducted in the sub-basement crawlspace of Building 1 of the Albany Stratton VA Medical Center found soil contaminated with up to 2% asbestos. This finding has raised concerns about the potential for worker exposure to asbestos while performing maintenance and construction tasks in this area.

Air samples (personal and area) were collected while contractor employees were surveying and/or collecting surface samples in this area. These samples showed exposure at, or below, the background level of 0.01 f/cc (fibers per cubic centimeter) of asbestos. The duties performed during sampling did not generate significant levels of airborne dust.

Based upon these samples, the crawlspace may be entered without respiratory protection provided the following conditions are met:

- Employees are able to walk (erect or semi-erect), on paths or on raised areas.
- Work activities do not generate significant airborne dust, including but not limited to:
  - No digging or drilling into the dirt.
  - No dragging of tools, equipment or supplies over the dirt.
  - No blowing of air onto dirt, i.e. fans or compressed air

Employees may voluntarily choose to wear respiratory protection. If they do so, they will need to comply with OSHA and VA requirements/policy (including medical evaluation and fit-testing).

For work other than that described above, employees/contractors must comply with VA Policy SL-001-69: Crawlspace Entry Procedures for VA Employees.

The VA is continuing to collect data to evaluate the potential for exposure while working in the sub-basement crawlspace including work activities that generate dust. When this data is obtained, the VA will review and modify this guidance as appropriate.

Please contact me with questions or to review monitoring data.