

Asbestos – A Concern of the Past?

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Here's a quiz for you:

- Can you find asbestos in new brakes today?**Yes!**
- Is the U.S. still manufacturing products with asbestos today?**Yes!**
- Has the U.S. banned the use of asbestos?**No!**
- Is the U.S. importing products containing asbestos?**Yes!**
- Does the U.S. regulate asbestos in consumer products, such as toys?**No!**

Do you see a disturbing trend here? Many people are under the belief that the use of asbestos was banned in the United States. Only a few types of materials have been banned (thermal system insulation, spray-on fireproofing, some plasters). EPA attempted to ban all asbestos in the late 1980s, with much fanfare, but the ban was remanded by the court system in 1991, with little fanfare. Thus, it is still present today in many building materials and friction products. Over Christmas last year, it was even found in a popular toy (the CSI Fingerprint Examination Kit), which was being manufactured in China. Products containing vermiculite and talc are also raising concerns because asbestos may be present in the locations where these minerals are mined. And while there is no restriction on the manufacture of most asbestos products, when it comes time to remove those same asbestos-containing products (floor tiles, glues/mastics, gaskets, roofing materials, etc), we are highly regulated by many government agencies. Removal can only be conducted by licensed, trained personnel, in a specific, controlled fashion. It becomes a time-consuming and expensive endeavor.

Here at the University, prior to any renovation or demolition, an asbestos inspection must be conducted first, and if asbestos materials will be impacted, licensed asbestos contractors must properly remove the material. See the [“Impact of Federal and State Asbestos Regulations”](#) document on our website. Further information on asbestos can be found at the Connecticut Department of Public Health's [Asbestos Program](#) website, as well as [EPA's Asbestos Program](#) and [OSHA's Asbestos Topics](#) websites.