

FIBER RELEASE EPISODE GUIDANCE FOR THE DESIGNATED PERSON

A **fiber release episode**, as defined by the Department of Labor Standards (DLS) at 454 CMR 28.02 and AHERA 40 CFR 763.83, means any uncontrolled or unintentional disturbance of asbestos containing material (ACM) resulting in a visible emission.

The use of best practices when responding to a fiber release episode will ensure that building occupants are protected and that the fiber release episode is promptly and effectively remediated. The minimum requirements for responding to a fiber release episode are set forth in 454 CMR 28.13(7)(e)1 and 2. The Designated Person should assess the situation, implement initial steps to contain the release, and contact their asbestos consultant to assist with a prompt and effective response action.

A **minor** fiber release involves the disturbance of three or fewer square or linear feet of ACM. A **major** fiber release involves the disturbance of greater than three square or linear feet of asbestos. The response action for any **major** fiber release episode requires a project design specifying means and methods, and must be conducted by a licensed asbestos contractor. The Local Education Agency (LEA) must notify DLS of any major fiber release within 24 hours of its occurrence, and if necessary, file written notification to the state [454 CMR 28.13(7)(e)2.d].

The initial steps that the Designated Person must take to protect building occupants include:

1. Isolating the area. Restrict access to the area by the general public. Foot traffic through the area can spread the extent of contamination to clean areas of the building, and expose building occupants to asbestos fibers.
2. Post warning signs at all access points to the area. Signs should be large and readily visible. Signs should indicate: Restricted Area. Asbestos Hazard. No unauthorized access. No entry without proper training and equipment.
3. Shut down or temporarily modify the air handling system to prevent the distribution of airborne asbestos fibers to unaffected areas of the building.
4. Notify DLS within 24 hours of the release. Contact the DLS AHERA program hotline at DLSfeedback@state.ma.us or 617-626-6290.
5. Contact the asbestos consultant to evaluate the situation and assist the Designated Person in developing a remediation strategy. The strategy may include bulk sampling, air sampling and/or wipe sampling.
6. Contact the asbestos contractor to clean visible debris, and remove or repair damaged or exposed ACM.

Keep a record of the event in the AHERA management plan: date and location, description of episode, what interim control measures were used, the project design, contractor information and any air testing reports.