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| **Title** | **Asbestos and Excavation** |
| **Scope** | Applies across all VU Campuses and Grounds where excavation may occur |
| **References** | OHS Regulations 2017 Part 4.4 Asbestos – Campus site plans & asbestos registers.  |
| **Why** | Guidance re asbestos controls during excavation works where asbestos may be present.  |
| **What**\*ACM= Asbestos Containing Material | Asbestos may be present in soil on Victoria University Land due to previous use. Typical locations where asbestos may be present include:- * Where buildings were present at the location and were erected before 1990
* Where there is fill which that may be contaminated with ACM.
* Where compressed fibre pipes for example water pipes are present (typically 1950’s)
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| **First Action** | The following guidelines are provided where there is a suspicion that ACM may be present during excavation. Before excavation, consult the asbestos registers which may identify known locations of \*ACM. Where excavation is at the location and depth of a known asbestos site, implement the appropriate procedures i.e. Asbestos Management – Removal Procedure  |
| **Control measures**  | Have disposable P1/P2 respirators, gloves and disposable overalls available and wear these as required. Safety eye wear and safety boots must be worn when digging.Where soil is to be excavated, recommendations include: - dust suppression methods such as spraying and suitable wetting agents, securing and sealing the site and preventing access by others. Where ACM is identified, notify the Asbestos Coordinator, implement the required procedures and ensure all ACM is double wrapped in plastic, labelled and disposed to an approved landfill site via EPA waste transportation system.  |
| **Excavation**  | ***Small holes e.g. for tree planting or post*** | ***Medium hole > 300mm deep > 1m wide*** | ***Significant excavations for works. Division 6.*** |
| **Actions** | *Ensure area is well dampened. Have water ready to provide dampening. Where asbestos is seen implement* ***“Limited Asbestos Removal Work”*** *as per VU Asbestos Management Procedure under direction of the Asbestos Coordinator.* | *Barricade area. Dampen to minimise dust generation, set up hose, minimise airborne material. Arrange a spotter to communicate if any asbestos containing materials are identifed. Where asbestos is seen cease work, seal, notify Asbestos Coordinator.* | *Wearing correct PPE, sample soil at reasonable frequencies, locations and depths of proposed excavation for asbestos. Discuss sample plan, results and action plan with Asbestos Coordinator.**Update site map/registers for ACM from results.*  |
| **Health Risks** | Frequent inhalation of higher concentrations of asbestos fibres can cause asbestosis – scarring of the lungs or mesothilioma – cancer of the lung external lining or lung cancer.  |
| **Most Risk** | Asbestos fibres present health risks when fibres become airborne and are inhaled. The risk of airborne asbetos fibres is minimal where materials are wetted. Only use damp wiping or HEPA vacuum for cleaning. If asbestos is present NEVER DRY SWEEP! |
| **Victoria University** | All Victoria University buildings have been audited by consultants and registers of asbestos containing materials have been developed for every building at every campus. Any Asbestos containing materials which are contained in a matrix, by paint or enclosure have labels and, provided no airborne fibres are generated, pose no health risks.  |
| **Registers**  | [Asbestos Registers](http://intranet.vu.edu.au/AsbestosRegisters) - Access by all VU Staff  |
| *Contacts for further Information*  | *VU Asbestos Coordinator*  |
| *Prepared by:* | *Anne Fisk, Senior Advisor OHS & Wellness* | *Date: 24th October 2018* |