

Shared Learning

Asbestos Discovered in Fire Door

What Happened?

A locksmith was engaged to install new locks on several doors at the Matahina power station. Unknown to Manawa at the time, while drilling a new lock on the external dangerous goods store door, white powder was observed by one of the locksmiths. On his return the following morning, the worker notified a site team member of the discovery.

A sample was sent for testing, the area barricaded off, and the team alerted. The test returned as positive for asbestos and a notification was submitted to WorkSafe. A review of old drawings of the door revealed it was a fire door, with a ¼" layer of asbestos millboard directly behind an outer plywood layer. Two other doors with similar detail were discovered and labelled with asbestos warnings. None of the doors had been labelled as fire doors.

What did we learn?

Two previous asbestos surveys conducted at Matahina had not identified the doors as containing asbestos. Furthermore, fire doors were not listed under potentially contaminated assets. There may be asbestos containing assets on site that have not previously been tested or identified on the register. Older fire doors may contain an asbestos core and it is difficult to identify without labels or distinct markings. Fire doors without labels should be treated as though they may contain asbestos.

The contractor involved did not immediately suspect the white powder of being asbestos. Asbestos awareness training is an important step in knowing how to recognise asbestos containing material as well as knowing what to do if you suspect asbestos may be present.

What can we apply to our work today?

Asbestos management plans (AMP), registers

- Check drawings for doors installed pre-1980's for details of asbestos material
- During the review of site AMPs – add fire doors to the plan under potentially contaminated assets.

Planning invasive work

- When planning invasive works, consider potential for asbestos to be disturbed or discovered as part of the risk assessment. Ask – have we considered if asbestos could be present?
- Review the AMP for known locations and potentially contaminated assets.

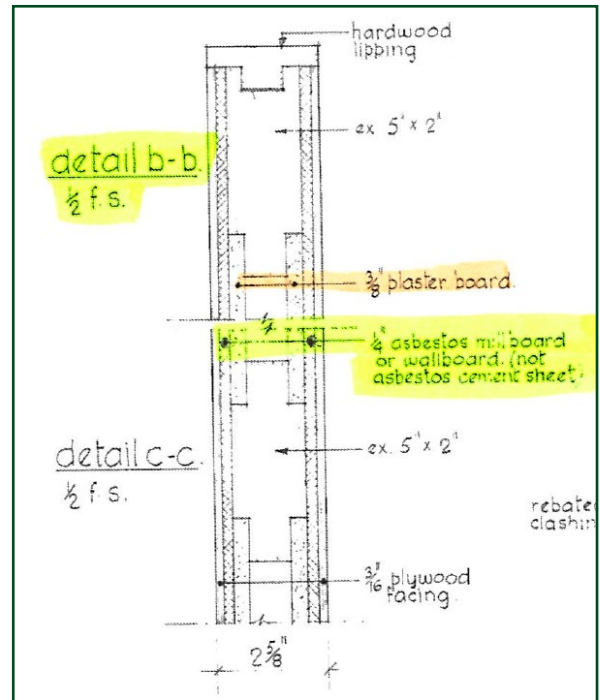
Suspected asbestos process

- Be familiar with the process for suspected asbestos, sample collection and PPE.
- Know how to recognise asbestos and what to do if its suspected. Asbestos awareness courses are available through the online learning portal.

If something unexpected happens, and uncertainty has increased, press pause and discuss with others.



Dangerous Goods Store Door



Drawing of Dangerous Goods Store Door

For more information

There is useful information on the [WorkSafe website](#) including recently updated guidelines regarding Asbestos Management.