

EMAILED March 8, 2017

Dear Faculty, Staff and Students,

We are writing to let you know that the university has ordered asbestos testing after a report of an unusual accumulation of dust was made on March 7 in a sixth floor laboratory at the Medical Sciences Building (MSB). The lab – and two lab support rooms – have been closed and will remain so until it is confirmed whether or not a safety risk exists.

The health and safety of our faculty, staff and students is our top priority. The university has conducted daily air quality tests in the building since work to upgrade our laboratory space began this fall and no asbestos has been found in those samples.

This new incident follows two recent reports where dust containing asbestos fibres was found and safely cleared from MSB labs in accordance with U of T's asbestos management policies and procedures. In each instance, labs were temporarily closed and faculty and students were informed. Dust in two other labs was tested and came back negative for asbestos.

We will be conducting additional air quality testing throughout MSB starting later this week. We will make the results of those tests, as well as the routine daily tests, available through the university's Environmental Health and Safety Office. Environmental Health and Safety experts also will be available to address specific questions at departmental meetings and individual sessions will be arranged for those who have particular concerns.

As we continue to upgrade our facilities, the university together with our contractors, will be increasing inspections of spaces where asbestos abatement is taking place and continuing to test air quality daily.

We have heard from some of you who have questions and we will continue to update you with any new information in meetings with your department and in writing.

If you have any specific concerns please contact your department chair or Prof. Rick Hegele, Vice Dean Research and innovation at: Richard.hegele@utoronto.ca

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