

Importance of Hazardous Materials Abatement Design

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An accurate and comprehensive hazardous materials abatement design (Abatement Design) is a valuable component of any project involving the disturbance or potential disturbance of known or suspect hazardous materials. An Abatement Design serves three primary functions:

1. Identify, locate, and quantify hazardous materials (e.g., asbestos, lead, polychlorinated biphenyls, mercury, universal waste) that must be removed or abated to facilitate the project scope of work.
2. Reference applicable regulatory requirements and industry standard protocols to promote compliance during the work.
3. Provide solutions for hazardous materials abatement to limit exposure to workers and occupants and to appropriately address the hazardous material in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

The absence of an accurate and complete Abatement Design can result in project cost overrun and/or worker/occupant exposure to hazardous materials. These issues often escalate into legal or regulatory repercussions.

Project cost overrun:

Significant project cost overrun can occur if the abatement of hazardous materials within the required project area is not adequately described in the contractor bid documents. Lack of hazardous materials identification, inaccurate quantities, or limited description pertaining to existing conditions that may affect the abatement work are likely to result in schedule delays and change orders.



A review of current project plans and a pre-design walk-through by the abatement designer are important steps to mitigate the potential for project cost overrun. Reliance solely on the findings of a hazardous materials survey to determine the abatement required for a project can be risky, as it is not uncommon to have a survey completed prior to a project scope of work being fully defined. An abatement designer will compare the hazardous materials survey(s) to the most up-to-date scope of work for the project and identify items for inclusion in the Abatement Design, prior to the project bid. Plan review and site walk-through can limit the potential for schedule impact and project cost overrun by confirming locations and estimated quantities of known or suspect hazardous materials and identifying existing site conditions that may need description on the abatement plans.

Worker/occupant exposure to hazardous materials:

Hazardous materials exposure can occur due to an inaccurate or incomplete Abatement Design. For example, if scheduled demolition of a wall occurs, and an asbestos-containing material exists behind the wall that was not identified in the Abatement Design, there is a risk for disturbance of the asbestos-containing material and associated exposure potential.

An experienced abatement designer is cognizant of where hazardous materials commonly exist and can assess the potential for concealed hazardous materials relative to dates of original construction and renovations, locations of different functional spaces, and review of historical documents. If the potential for concealed hazardous material exists, an abatement design will identify the impacted areas, and provide an applicable approach to completing work in those areas safely.

If you have a project that has the potential to disturb hazardous materials, ATL has experienced environmental professionals in locations throughout New York State, to provide consultation and perform hazardous materials abatement design.

For more information, contact Joseph Grabowski at [315-386-4578](tel:315-386-4578), info@atlantictesting.com, or visit AtlanticTesting.com.

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