

Email from February 2017: Current information on harmful substances / precautionary health measures

Dear Staff Members,
dear Academics,

At the beginning of last year, the Bau- und Liegenschaftsbetrieb (BLB) NRW as owner of the University and head of structural modernisation informed the University of a possible new source of harmful substance. The details of this were sent to you in an email from 19 February 2016. The substance in question is putty with traces of asbestos fibres. Contradicting earlier investigations in which no traces of asbestos fibres were found, the more recent results show that the putty in the main university building (UHG) contains traces of asbestos (less than one per cent).

According to the surveyor, undamaged putty built into the wall poses no health risks. As it is difficult to see the filler because the walls have been painted, basic precautionary health measures must be observed when carrying out work on the walls.

In consultation with the BLB, the surveyor as well as the regional government of Detmold which is responsible in this case, the following precautionary measures apply for reasons of health and safety:

- Placing drawing pins or hammering nails into the plasterboard poses no health risks. This work can be carried out by all members of staff without protective measures.
- Putting screws into the plasterboard is also allowed, as long as a drill is not used. This work may also be carried out without protective measures and from all staff members.
- All other work (e.g. taking out screws, drilling holes, taking down pin boards) must be undertaken by qualified persons.

The precautionary measures sent to you on 19 February 2016 no longer apply. The above findings and regulations apply at present to the main university building. The filler material in the adjacent buildings from the same period (Center for Interdisciplinary Research (ZIF), Behavioural Biology Bielefeld, the cooling facility, the sports hall in Lampingstraße) is under investigation. Until these findings are concluded, the same precautionary measures listed above apply to these adjacent buildings.

In the newer additions to the University campus (Building X, Building G, CITEC, Building Q) this harmful substance was not used.

The Facility Management is available to answer any questions you may have on building works. Please contact the Department for Planning and Building: service-pb@uni-bielefeld.de.

If you have any further questions you can contact AGUS, the university sub-department for work, health and environment: www.uni-bielefeld.de/agus.

More information is available at: www.uni-bielefeld.de/asbest (in German)

Yours Faithfully,

Dr. Stephan Becker

Kanzler