



## Questions & Answers about the Grace Building Demolition

**Q: What happens before a building is demolished?**

**A:** Before a building is demolished, the owner must remove any materials that might be hazardous. This is called abatement. YNHH will use the most environmentally safe techniques to make sure that all materials are safely removed from the Grace Building before it is demolished.

**Q: What kind of hazardous materials might be in an office building like this one?**

**A:** An office building contains the same basic materials found in ordinary households: insulation, ceiling and floor tiles, fluorescent light bulbs, computer screens, thermostats, air conditioners, water coolers, refrigerators or old paint – some of which might contain lead.

**Q: How do you know how much asbestos is in the building?**

**A:** Licensed environmental inspectors perform a detailed survey of the building, inspecting it visually and collecting about 350 material samples and analyzing them to confirm or deny the existence of asbestos, and to define locations, quantities and types of asbestos-containing materials.

**Q: How do you remove the asbestos?**

**A:** The materials that contain asbestos are removed by trained, licensed personnel usually inside a self-contained area enclosed with heavy-gauge plastic sheeting. These work areas have a special negative air filtering system, which acts as a vacuum to make sure the air inside the area does not leave the building. These work areas are inspected regularly by a specially trained, licensed, outside industrial hygiene firm.

**Q: How do you remove the other hazardous materials?**

**A:** A lead-based paint inspection showed that the areas tested were well below the legal levels that would require the removal of lead paint prior to demolition. Any other items, such as fluorescent light tubes, are self-contained and easily removed and prepared for transport to a recycling facility or landfill.

**Q: How do you know that hazardous materials are not escaping into the air, despite precautions?**

**A:** We will collect air samples during the course of abatement work to ensure the contained areas are constructed properly and work is being performed according to strict regulations. The air samples are collected and analyzed to ensure that air conditions are within acceptable health levels.

**Q: Are building demolitions such as this overseen or regulated in any official way?**

**A:** The entire process is regulated and ongoing inspections are conducted by independent, licensed inspectors, as well as staff from the Connecticut Department of Public Health. A licensed asbestos project monitor does inspections before, during and after abatement to make sure it is being done in accordance with regulatory requirements. Air samples are collected before the containment areas are removed to make sure the air is OK.

**Q: What has the Hospital done to make sure the abatement and demolition is as safe as possible?**

**A:** The Hospital has made safety an important part of the planning process for the entire project. They hired Tighe & Bond, Consulting Engineers and Environmental Specialists, who performed all pre-demolition inspections and created the project design. Tighe & Bond will also be present during the abatement and demolition process to monitor the job, and collect and analyze air samples as required by law.

**Q: What happens after the building is assessed?**

**A:** A licensed project designer creates a specification package based on the information gathered from the completed inspection. These specifications are used by the contractors who are bidding on the job, so they can factor that into the cost estimates. After a contractor has been selected, everyone will meet to discuss the project in order to ensure a smooth, safe project plan.

**Q: When will the abatement process begin and how long does take?**

**A:** The entire process will take up to three months to make sure the building is cleaned out thoroughly. Everyone will be out of the building in May so we hope to begin abatement then.

**Q: When will the actual demolition begin and how long will it take?**

**A:** We hope to begin demolition this summer and it should take about two months.

**Q: What are the hazards that might be associated with the demolition?**

**A:** Virtually all environmental hazards will have been removed or minimized before demolition. The demolition will be monitored by the owner and the construction manager and will be done according to strict specifications prepared by licensed engineers. Demolition dust will be minimized with large hoses which will spray a fine water mist; the building façade will be carefully dismantled; and air samples will be collected during all facets of the demolition; and all materials be appropriately disposed of.

**Q: Is there any danger to patients, employees or neighbors?**

**A:** No. In addition to the water mist which will keep the site moist and reduce dust, any occupied areas of the Hospital will be separated with dust proof partitions. An additional filter will be added to the Hospital's heating and air conditioning systems, and we have also modified the air intake vents in the adjacent building.

**Q: Could it affect people with asthma or other respiratory conditions?**

No. There will be regular air quality monitoring during demolition under the direction of a certified industrial hygienist to make sure the air levels are safe. We are working closely with our of Epidemiology and Infection Control department to make sure there is no danger to any patients, staff or visitors in any buildings or the surrounding areas.

**Q: Should area residents have any concerns?**

**A:** The project should not be worrisome in any way to area residents. We will take the appropriate measures to provide free and safe passage near sidewalks, streets and adjacent buildings. At most, this project might present a mild annoyance in terms of noise or dust on cars in the vicinity. We have hired a sound consultant to help us minimize the noise. Both abatement and demolition work will take place only on weekdays, between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m.

**Q: Would there be any danger to children near the vicinity?**

**A:** Any opening in the ground will have a 7-foot tall enclosure around it – a 3-foot barrier wall plus a 4-foot fence on top of it. There will also be an 8-foot chain link fence along the Frontage Road side of the site.

**Q: How will the project affect traffic and parking?**

**A:** Traffic might be slowed down at times, but the streets will be totally usable, with both lanes of traffic open. We will remove the one lane of parking on Park Street in front of the Grace Building. Most occupants of the Grace Building will move to 300 George Street, the old SNET building, this spring.