

Building Occupant Renovation Communications

Introduction

Construction and renovation is an on-going feature at Yale University and vital for maintaining the physical condition of buildings. It is also important for upgrading critical support systems such as fire detection and protection, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning, and telecommunications. Although construction site safety is the contractual responsibility of companies performing the work, Yale has a series of review and communication steps in place to help ensure that contractor safety obligations are met and that the health and safety of building occupants and neighbors is not compromised.

This document describes formal criteria and processes for communicating key information about the scope and duration of large renovation projects, their potential for disruption and nuisance to building occupants, and the means for occupants to obtain additional information about the work.

Criteria for Triggering Program

Projects that meet the following criteria will implement the building occupant communication program:

- Size – Involves a contiguous area larger than 2,500 square feet;
- Nature of Work – Renovation activities will routinely create exposures to building occupants while performing their normal work duties (e.g., construction work spaces, or contaminants generated by them, routinely converge with spaces regularly occupied by building occupants) or the work involves processes that can create a significant nuisance exposure; and
- Duration – Project anticipated to persist for at least one month.

Spaces or buildings that will be unoccupied during the work, or are adequately separated from occupied areas throughout the duration of the construction renovation, are exempt from this program since the potential for occupant impact will be removed. Exempt spaces must be separated by physical barriers that prevent entrance to the space and additional barriers that prevent the migration of construction contaminants (dust, vapors, etc.) into adjacent occupied spaces.

Routine maintenance of building components or work that is conducted throughout a building to upgrade a particular component (e.g. retrofit of lighting systems) is exempt from this program.

Responsibility

The Yale Project Manager is responsible for initiating this communication program and ensuring procedures are in place for completing each type notification. Environmental Health and Safety, Construction Managers, Area Lead Administrators and/or other Yale Administrators, share responsibilities with the Yale Project Manager for the content and distribution of the notifications. The specific responsibilities of each party will be project specific.

Communication Program Elements

When a project meets the criteria listed above, the following types of communication will be initiated between the Yale Project Manager, EHS contact, Area Lead Administrators or other Yale Administrators, General Contractor, and affected building occupants and service personnel.

- **Initial Notification.** Well in advance of the start of a construction project (between 2 weeks and 3 months depending on the scope of the project) an initial notification is made to each department (typically those adjacent to, above, or below the space planned for renovation) that describes the scope of the proposed project.
- **Construction Notification.** One to two weeks before the start of a construction project, a second notification is made to the same recipients as the initial notice plus any additional departments that

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might be impacted by the project (e.g., security, custodial services, physical plant, and those responsible for scheduling the use of the space). Every attempt will be made to broadly disseminate the notice concerning the project orientation session. A notice will be posted in conspicuous locations (such as at time clocks, departmental bulletin boards, safety bulletin boards, etc.) so that building occupants and service personnel, union members, students and visitors will be notified. This notice is similar to the initial notification but includes a project start date and estimate of duration. This notice also identifies a date when personnel from impacted departments can participate in a project orientation session. During the project orientation session the following issues will be discussed: (1) the project scope and anticipated duration; (2) likely disruptions to routine operations and their solutions; (3) means for communicating about the project as it progresses, “look ahead” notifications; and (4) anticipated nuisance or environmental health and safety issues.

- **“Look Ahead” Notification.** Throughout the project impacted departments and personnel will be provided with “look aheads,” which describe the work to be conducted during the next two to four weeks and the likely impacts. The form for these notifications will be project specific, but may include e-mail and paper postings. Notifications will include the name of contacts for additional information. The project’s Construction Manager is responsible for listing the activities and likely impacts in the “look ahead” notifications and initiating the distribution. The distribution of these notifications downstream from the Construction Manager will be project specific but will include postings in conspicuous locations (such as at time clocks, departmental bulletin boards, safety bulletin boards, etc.) so that building occupants and service personnel, union members, students and visitors will be notified.

The types of communications outlined in this program may be supplemented as appropriate or necessary during a project. Certain projects not meeting the trigger criteria may nevertheless need to be included in this communication process if an activity-based risk assessment suggests that implementation of this program would help manage occupants exposure to a significant nuisance or potential hazard.