



Conversion of older warehouses or manufacturing buildings into residential apartments or condos has become very trendy these days, and nowhere more so than in Richmond, Virginia. Two popular areas in the city for this type of activity are Scotts Addition and Manchester. These areas have many older manufacturing plants and warehouse storage facilities. Buildings of this type are structurally sound with solid foundations and are perfect for repurposing. Since they are already connected to the utility systems there is less permitting and land disturbance issues to address. Such was the case with the Model Tobacco building located on Jefferson Davis Highway in South Richmond.

Often, these older buildings contain a significant amount of asbestos or lead that must be removed before major renovation work can begin. The feasibility of the project can often hinge on the cost of abatement of these substances.

The Model Tobacco project had two (2) major structures to renovate: the main building and the power plant. The main building was to be converted into 203 apartment units of up to 3 bedrooms. There would be a 4,000-square-foot community section on the rooftop. The former power plant would be transformed into a recreational center with a pool, basketball court, gym, climbing wall and other recreational facilities.

The following abatement scope would need to be completed before preparing these buildings for the planned renovations.

Main Building and Power Plant Building

- Removal of asbestos roof flashings and flashing tar in the penthouse, elevator shafts and rooftop equipment
- Removal of asbestos roof pitch pockets
- Removal of asbestos in parapet walls
- Asbestos and lead in wall coping and caulking
- Removal of asbestos from HVAC equipment, 5 boilers, piping and ductwork insulation throughout the main building
- Removal of asbestos from one chiller, 2 boilers and 7 tanks located in the power plant
- Removal of asbestos in ceilings with plaster, cork and mastic
- Removal of asbestos from steam piping and breeching in the power plant
- Lead paint in various sections of the building
- Removal of asbestos around the brick structure supporting the boilers



MODEL TOBACCO RENOVATION PROJECT

Flexibility

Schedule flexibility was key to the success of this project, because many different concurrent construction activities were ongoing in separate sections of the buildings. Even the best planning requires continuous adjustment to keep all parties working efficiently. One trade may complete an activity and need a new area to start working in, while another company might be held up and require a delay in their section of the building. There was no shortage of changes in plans during this project. Experienced supervisors that can foresee potential conflicts before they arise will make all the difference in maintaining the construction schedule.



Equipment

Waco owns and maintains the critical equipment used in asbestos and lead removal. These include negative air machines, HEPA vacuums, containment accessories, large ventilation fans, monitors, generators, pumps and other equipment. Ownership of these assets assures that they will be available when projects of this magnitude occur. We also have arrangements with major rental houses for the procurement of cranes, man-lifts, forklifts, scaffolding, platforms and elevators.



Safety

There are no shortcuts to safety when removing hazardous materials, especially on large projects with many other contractors on site. Monitoring the air, ensuring negative pressure in all containment structures, and displaying proper signage and warning labels are critical. Open communication to all involved can never be compromised and is an ongoing reason why Waco continues to be awarded projects such as Model Tobacco.



Success

Success depends on a company that can incorporate a creative and collaborative construction approach. Waco has managers with decades of experience who can foresee potential problems before they occur. Our company has a seasoned workforce that is experienced in getting results. Waco was able to bring these important attributes to the developer/owner and deliver the project on time and within budget. Trust the professionals at Waco to assure your next abatement project goes according to plan.



Project Specifics:

- Value: \$1,100,000
- Man hours: 18,500 +
- Duration: 15 months
- Superintendents: Marshall Taylor / Ryan Green
- Project Manager: Louis Walker



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