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# Asbestos ceiling at library inspected

SANTA CRUZ — A decision whether to remove all asbestos from the meeting room area of the downtown library, or simply repair the section of asbestos-laden ceiling that fell over the weekend is awaiting further review by experts.

Anne Turner, director of the city-county library system, said Thursday that a team from Coastwide Environmental Technologies of Watsonville reviewed the problem Wednesday afternoon.

But she wanted experts from Dwan Associates, the library's advisers on its asbestos problem, to check air quality on Thursday to determine if dangerous asbestos fibers had become airborne since the six-foot-square piece of ceiling dropped.

Turner said she would release the findings from Dwan's examination early next week.

The meeting room area has been closed since Monday, when the water-soaked asbestos was found on the floor. A pipe had broken during the weekend freeze, spraying water onto the ceiling and soaking into the asbestos, making it heavy enough to drop.

A special sealant had been sprayed over the exposed asbestos in the meeting room area last spring to make it safer.

Asbestos, a widely used mineral in such products as brake linings and building materials, has been found to cause lung cancer and other serious diseases. It was the subject of a gradual ban

imposed by the Environmental Protection Agency in 1989.

But many public facilities built before the danger was known have had to get rid of or seal exposed asbestos for safety reasons.

Turner said if results of the testing leads to a recommendation the already-sealed asbestos be removed from the meeting room area, she then will have to decide how to pay for it.

The spring project forced the library to close for about four weeks and cost \$83,000 to seal asbestos in the meeting room area and remove it from the storage collection area. Both rooms are on the second floor.