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Health Hazard from Fibreglass Material Used In Audiometric Booths

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Batts or blankets made of glass fibers (commonly denominated as glass wool) are used as a sound absorption element in audiometric booths. Generally, it is hidden behind the perforated metal panels covering the walls and ceiling of the booth. In many instances batts are contained in polyethylene bags so there are no loose fibres floating around. There have been concerns that those loose fibres can cause lung cancer through inhalation.

All fibreglass wools commonly used for thermal and acoustical insulation were reclassified by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (“IARC”) in October 2001 as Not Classifiable as to carcinogenicity to humans (Group 3). In the USA the National Toxicology Program ("NTP"), also in June 2011, removed from its Report on Carcinogens all biosoluble glass wool used in home and building insulation and for non-insulation products

Fibres can be classified as “nuisance” as, if loose, they can irritate the skin, the eyes, or the lungs. However, this is not the case in an audiometric booth where it is close to impossible to find loose fibres.

Bottom line, there are no health hazards due to fiber glass in the audiometric booth.