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asbestos essentials

Non-licensed tasks

This information will help employers and the self-employed to comply with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.

It is also useful for trade union and employee safety representatives.

Asbestos fibres can cause lung cancer and lung diseases.

The sheet covers the points you need to follow to reduce exposure to an adequate level.

It can act as a risk assessment for asbestos if it matches what you plan to do.

Follow all the points, or use equally effective measures.

Only carry out this work if you are properly trained and have the right equipment.

Main points

- Asbestos fibres can kill.
- Keep exposures low using all the controls in this sheet.
- Also follow sheet a0 and equipment and method (em) sheets; see 'Essential information'.



Collapsed ceiling

Clearing up debris following collapse of a ceiling or wall covered with textured coating

What this sheet covers

This sheet describes good practice when you need to clear up wall or ceiling debris with a textured coating.

This sheet does not apply to the removal or renovation of remaining coatings.

It is NOT appropriate if the coating covers asbestos insulating board. Use an HSE-licensed contractor for such work.

Preparing the work area

- Ensure that the area is safe to enter.
- Do you need to isolate any services?
- Restrict access – minimise the number of people present.
- A two-stage airlock is not required.
- Ensure adequate lighting.

Equipment

- Warning tape and notices
- Class H vacuum cleaner (BS 8520) – see sheet em4
- Scoop or trowel
- Shovel
- Bucket of water and rags
- Asbestos waste container, eg labelled polythene sack
- Lockable skip for larger quantities of waste
- Clear polythene sack

Personal protective equipment (PPE) – see sheet em6

- Provide:
 - disposable overalls fitted with a hood;
 - boots without laces (laced boots are hard to decontaminate); and
 - respiratory protective equipment.



Procedure

- Shovel or scoop smaller pieces into the asbestos waste container.
- Put larger amounts in the lockable skip.

Cleaning and disposal

- Clean contaminated furniture and furnishings with the Class H vacuum cleaner.

MORE HELP

■ **More asbestos pictures –**
www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/gallery.htm

■ **Help to decide if work is licensed**
– www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/licensing/index.htm

■ For information about health and safety, or to report inconsistencies or inaccuracies in this guidance, visit www.hse.gov.uk/. You can view HSE guidance online or order priced publications from the website. HSE priced publications are also available from bookshops.

■ These task (a) sheets and equipment and method (em) sheets can be downloaded free from www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/essentials/index.htm

■ See sheet a0 for details of more guidance.

- Wrap cleaned furniture in polythene sheeting. Remove cleaned furnishings.
- Dispose of any contaminated furniture or furnishings that cannot be cleaned.
- Clean the equipment and the area with damp rags.
- Put debris, used rags and other waste in the asbestos waste container and tape it closed.
- Put the asbestos waste container in a clear polythene sack and tape it closed.
- Disposal – see sheet em9.

Personal decontamination

- See sheet em8.

Clearance and checking off

- Visually inspect the area to make sure that it has been cleaned properly.
- Clearance air sampling is not normally required.
- Get the premises owner, dutyholder or client to check off the job.

OTHER HAZARDS

Manual handling – see
www.hse.gov.uk/msd/index.htm.
Plan how to remove and handle heavy material and articles safely.

Electrical hazards – see
www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/index.htm. Get a competent electrician to isolate and reconnect electricity supply.

There may also be other hazards – you need to consider them all.

SAFETY CHECKLIST

- ✓ Can you avoid disturbing asbestos by doing the job in some other way?
- ✓ Do you need a licence for the work?
- ✓ Always follow all legal requirements.
- ✓ Follow the task guidance sheet.
- ✓ Use an asbestos waste container.
- ✓ Dispose at a licensed disposal site.

Caution:

- Don't sweep up dust or debris - use a Class H vacuum cleaner or damp rags.
- Don't take used overalls home.
- Don't reuse disposable PPE.
- Don't smoke.
- Don't eat or drink in the work area.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Download and follow these advice sheets from www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/essentials/index.htm:

em1 What to do if you uncover or damage materials that could contain asbestos

em2 Training

em4 Using a Class H vacuum cleaner for asbestos

em6 Personal protective equipment (PPE)

em7 Using damp rags to clean surfaces of minor asbestos contamination

em8 Personal decontamination

em9 Disposal of asbestos waste

This guidance is issued by the Health and Safety Executive. Following the guidance is not compulsory and you are free to take other action. But if you do follow the guidance you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. Health and safety inspectors seek to secure compliance with the law and may refer to this guidance as illustrating good practice.

This document is available at www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/essentials/index.htm

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