

a11

asbestos essentials

Non-licensed tasks

This information will help employers, including the self-employed, comply with the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2006, to control exposure and protect health.

It is also useful for trade union representatives.

Asbestos fibre causes lung cancer and lung diseases.

This sheet describes good practice when you need to clear up asbestos cement. This includes decontamination following a fire, where asbestos cladding ruptures.

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

It is important to follow all the points, or use equally effective measures.

Only carry out this work if you are properly trained.

This sheet is not appropriate for cleaning debris from damaged asbestos lagging, coating or insulating board.

Use an HSE-licensed specialist contractor for such work.

Main points

- Asbestos fibres can kill.
- Keep exposures low using all the controls in this sheet.
- See also sheets em1, em2, em5, em6, em7 and em8.

Removing asbestos cement (AC) debris

Access

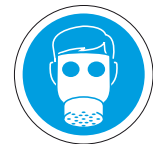
- Take precautions to prevent the risk of falling if this work is at height.
- Minimise the number of people present.
- Restrict access - close doors, and use warning tape and notices.
- Ensure adequate lighting.

Equipment

- Warning tape and notices;
- garden type sprayer;
- bucket of water and rags;
- adhesive tape; and
- asbestos waste container, eg labelled polythene sack.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

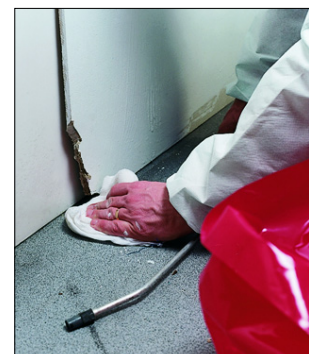
- Provide:
 - disposable overalls fitted with a hood (you may need waterproof overalls for work outside);
 - boots without laces (laced boots are hard to decontaminate); and
 - respiratory protective equipment - see sheet em6.



- A respirator is not normally required if there are only a few pieces of contamination in a small area, or the pieces are damp.

Procedure

- In large contaminated areas, eg following a fire, you may be unable to clean all surfaces. Just clean up obvious contamination in occupied areas, eg houses and gardens nearby.
- Dampen the debris with spray.
- Pick up larger pieces of debris and put them in the waste container.
- For rough surfaces, keep the debris damp and scrape it into the waste container.
- Use wet rags to clean contaminated surfaces then put them in the waste container.
- Press adhesive tape onto small dust deposits, then put it in the waste container.
- If necessary, repair the asbestos cement - see sheet a13.
- Put used rags and other waste in the waste container.
- Tape the container closed.



Use wet rags to clean contaminated surfaces. Put the rags in the waste container

Safety Checklist

- ✓ Can you avoid disturbing asbestos by doing the job in some other way?
- ✓ Do you need a license for the work?
- ✓ Always follow all legal requirements.
- ✓ Follow the task guidance sheet.
- ✓ Make sure other risks (eg work at height, manual handling) are assessed and controlled.
- ✓ Use only suitable asbestos waste containers.
- ✓ Double-wrap asbestos waste.
- ✓ Take asbestos waste to a licensed tip.

Caution:

- Don't sweep up dust or debris - use a Type H vacuum cleaner or wet rags.
- Don't take used overalls home.
- Don't re-use disposable PPE.
- Don't smoke.
- Don't eat or drink in the workplace.

Personal decontamination

See sheet em8.

Clearance procedure

- Visually inspect the area to make sure that it has been cleaned properly.
- Clearance air sampling is not normally required.

Essential information

Download and follow these advice sheets:

- em1 *What to do if you uncover or damage asbestos materials*
- em2 *Training*
- em5 *Wetting asbestos materials*
- em6 *Personal protective equipment (PPE)*
- em7 *Using rags to clean surfaces and equipment contaminated with asbestos*
- em8 *Personal decontamination*

Further information

- *Tower scaffolds* Construction Information Sheet CIS10 (rev4) HSE Books 2005 Web only version available at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/cis10.pdf
- *General access scaffolds and ladders* Construction Information Sheet CIS49 (rev1) HSE Books 2003 Web only version available at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/cis49.pdf
- *Health and safety in roof work* HSG33 (Second edition) HSE Books 1998 ISBN 0 7176 1425 5

Useful links

- For information about health and safety ring HSE's Infoline Tel: 0845 345 0055 Textphone: 0845 408 9577 e-mail: hse.infoline@natbrit.com.
- HSE priced and free publications are available from HSE Books Tel: 01787 881165 Website: www.hsebooks.co.uk.
- British Standards are available from BSI Customer Services, 389 Chiswick High Road, London W4 4AL Tel: 020 8996 9001 Fax: 020 8996 7001 e-mail: cservices@bsi-global.com Website: www.bsi-global.com.

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

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Published by the Health and Safety Executive 09/06

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.