

# em6 asbestos essentials

## Non-licensed tasks

This information will help employers, including the self-employed, comply with the **Control of Asbestos 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 what **personal protective equipment (PPE)** you need.

It also describes **respiratory protective equipment (RPE)**.

### Main points

- Check it out before you start work.
- You must be trained to use PPE and RPE properly.
- PPE and RPE are your last lines of defence against asbestos fibres. Follow the methods in the task guidance sheets.



*A respirator intended for use with general dust, doubled up to 'try' and give more protection is inadequate and should not be used.*

# Personal protective equipment (PPE)

## Equipment and method sheet

### Equipment

#### Overalls

- Provide disposable overalls. Type 5 (BS EN ISO 13982-1) are suitable. Cotton overalls hold dust and need specialist laundering.
- You may need waterproof overalls for outdoor work.
- Wear one size too big - this will help to prevent ripping at the seams.
- If the cuffs are loose, seal them with tape.
- Avoid wearing a long-sleeved shirt - these are difficult to cover properly.
- Wear the overall legs over footwear. Tucking them in lets dust into footwear.
- Wear the hood over the RPE straps.
- Dispose of used overalls as asbestos waste.



*Wear the overall hood over the straps of the RPE*

**Caution: Never take used overalls home.**

#### Gloves

- If you wear protective gloves, select single-use disposable gloves. If you must use latex gloves, select only 'low protein powder-free' gloves.
- Dispose of used gloves as asbestos waste.

#### Footwear

- Boots are preferable to disposable overshoes which cause a slipping risk.

**Caution: Never use laced boots, these are very difficult to clean properly.**

### Respiratory protective equipment (RPE)

- Select suitable RPE with an Assigned Protection Factor of 20 or more.

#### Suitable types of RPE:

- Disposable respirators to standards EN149 (type FFP3) or EN1827 (type FMP3);
- half masks (to standard EN140) with P3 filter; or
- semi-disposable respirators (to EN405) with P3 filter.
- This equipment should be suitable for most short duration non-licensed work. Workers should select a make and size that fits them.
- This equipment will not be suitable for people with beards or stubble, or for long periods of continuous use. Powered equipment will be necessary in such situations.
- More information on the selection of suitable RPE is given in HSG247, HSG53 and can be obtained from equipment suppliers. See 'Further information' and 'Useful links'.

### **Planning and preparation**

- Plan for and practice emergency procedures.
- Workers need to be fit tested to make sure that the RPE fits them properly.
- Arrange fit testing and training before the work starts, ask the supplier for help or contact BOHS ([www.bohs.org](http://www.bohs.org) or 01332 298101). Also see 'Useful links'.

### **Using RPE**



*Disposable RPE worn incorrectly*



*Disposable RPE worn correctly*

- Workers must be medically fit to wear RPE - seek medical advice if you are not sure.
- All types of RPE restrict what the wearer can do. It is uncomfortable to wear, particularly for long periods.
- The RPE has to be worn all the time and until the worker is away from the contaminated air.
- A person must be clean-shaven for the RPE to work.
- Fit the mask in accordance with the manufacturers instructions. Make sure it is worn correctly.
- Place the straps firmly around the top and back of the head. The mask should be tight against the face.
- When using disposable masks, pinch the top of the respirator over the nose.
- Carry out a fit check in accordance with the manufacturers instructions
- If the worker wears spectacles, they should put them on now. They must not create a gap between the mask and face.
- Put the overall hood over the straps.
- At the end of the shift, take off RPE last and, if it is disposable, put it in the asbestos waste. If it is any other type decontaminate, clean and store it properly for the next use.
- With half-mask type change filters regularly - your supplier may be able to advise you how often. Dispose of used filters as asbestos waste.

**Caution: Never leave the respirator lying around where it can collect dust. Never dangle the respirator round your neck.**

### **Maintenance of non disposable equipment**

- Keep RPE clean and in good working order - follow the manufacturers instructions.
- Inspect and check RPE for damage every time. Carry out more formal checks on a monthly basis (or every three months if used infrequently). Inspect all parts including valves and seals. Replace the respirator as appropriate.
- Clean RPE after use and store in a safe place away from contamination.

**Caution: Make sure the correct filter is fitted.**

### **Training**

- Make sure that RPE users know how to check their equipment is working properly before they put it on, how to check face fit, how to identify and replace worn or defective parts and that they know about the limitations of the RPE they are using.
- Instruct users to throw away disposable RPE/PPE as asbestos waste after one use.
- Tell workers to stop work and leave the area if they think their RPE is not working properly.

### Further Information

- *Asbestos: The licensed contractors' guide* HSG247 HSE Books 2006 ISBN 0 7176 2874 4
- *Respiratory protective equipment at work: A practical guide* HSG53 (Third edition) HSE Books 2005 ISBN 0 7176 2904 X
- *Fit testing of respiratory protective equipment facepieces* HSE Information Operational Circular OC 282/28 [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/fittesting.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/fittesting.pdf)

### Useful links

- HSE priced and free publications are available from HSE Books  
Tel: 01787 881165 Website: [www.hsebooks.co.uk](http://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](mailto:cservices@bsi-global.com) Website: [www.bsi-global.com](http://www.bsi-global.com).
- For information on PPE suppliers contact:
  - Asbestos Removal Contractors Association (ARCA)  
Website: [www.arcaweb.org.uk](http://www.arcaweb.org.uk)
  - Asbestos Control and Abatement Division (ACAD)  
Website: [www.tica-acad.co.uk](http://www.tica-acad.co.uk)
  - HSE's Infoline Tel: 0845 345 0055 Textphone: 0845 408 9577  
e-mail: [hse.infoline@natbrit.com](mailto:hse.infoline@natbrit.com).

This document is available at [www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos.htm)

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