

a21

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 good practice when you need to remove asbestos-containing bituminous products such as built-up roofing, gutter linings, damp-proof courses.

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 work with metal cladding lined with asbestos-containing bitumen (eg 'Galbestos'). See sheet a22.

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-containing bituminous products

Access

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



Built up bituminous roofing

Equipment

- 500-gauge polythene sheeting and duct tape;
- warning tape and notices;
- sharp knife;
- scraper;
- shovel;
- garden type sprayer;
- bucket of water and rags;
- asbestos waste container, eg labelled polythene sack;
- lockable skip for larger quantities of waste; and
- for roofwork, interlocking bucket-type rubble chute into the skip.



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.

Procedure

- Seal access points, eg skylights, with polythene sheeting and duct tape.

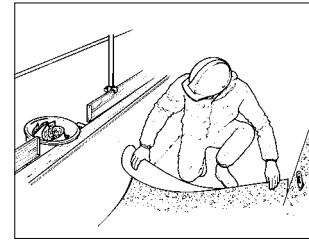
Caution: It is dangerous to seal over exhaust vents from gas-fired equipment. Can the gas be turned off?

Overlaying

- Can you avoid removal, eg by overlaying with non-asbestos bituminous felt?
- Note the presence of asbestos material, so it can be managed properly.

Removal

- Can you minimise the amount for removal, cutting around the area?
- For safe handling, cut and remove manageable sections. Place these in the chute or the skip.
- Remove adhering material by dampening and gentle scraping.
- Collect up all debris.
- Remove large dust deposits by dampening and shovelling into the waste container.
- Dampen dust and debris from disintegrating felt and place in the waste container.



*Cut and remove
manageable sections*

Caution: Never rip up asbestos bituminous felt, and never burn the debris.

Cleaning

- Clean the equipment with wet rags.
- Dismantle and decontaminate the chute with wet rags.
- Put debris, used rags, polythene sheeting and other waste in the waste container.
- Tape the container closed.

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*

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.

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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