



ASBESTOS

This TBT is not intended to replace full Asbestos Training, but only as a reminder.

1. What is asbestos? It is a naturally occurring fibrous mineral, which looks a bit like Rockwool or fibreglass in its raw state. In the past it has been used in many building products where it's range of properties were very useful especially it's heat, acid and corrosion resistance, it was also very cheap.
2. Breathing in asbestos dust can cause irreversible lung damage and cancer. Asbestos fibres are very sharp and strong and they can get stuck in the lung and drawn in deeper every time you take a breath. The body can't break down the fibres - there is no known cure from the illnesses caused. The more asbestos dust breathed in, the greater is the risk to health.
3. Asbestos may be found:
 - a. As asbestos insulation or sprayed coatings used for:
 - Thermal insulation of boilers, ancillary plant and pipe work
 - Fire protection of structural steelwork
 - Thermal and acoustic insulation of buildingsAny of the foregoing may be hidden from sight under floors, in pipe ducts, or above false ceilings.
 - b. As asbestos insulation board (AIB) used for:
 - Fire protection on doors
 - Protected exits
 - Fire protection on structural steelwork
 - Cladding on walls, ceilings and internal partitions



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- Ceiling tiles
- c. As asbestos cement which is found as:
- Corrugated sheets for roofing and cladding buildings
 - Flat sheets for partitioning, cladding and door facings
 - Rain water gutters and downpipes
 - Floor tiles
4. It is an employer's responsibility to determine whether asbestos is present in the workplace, and how it should be dealt with.
5. If there is any doubt as to the presence of asbestos, an asbestos survey must be undertaken by a qualified person.
6. Action to be taken:
- a. Asbestos insulation and sprayed coatings
- In most circumstances work involving these materials can only be carried out by someone who holds a licence from the HSE, who must be given 28 days notice of work commencing
 - Any work involving the asbestos must be carried out strictly in accordance with an Approved Code of Practice, by persons who are properly trained and equipped
- b. Asbestos insulation board - for short duration maintenance work:
- Workers must wear suitable approved respirators and suitable overalls
 - Working methods must minimise asbestos dust release – for instance, use hand tools and avoid breaking the boards
 - Do not allow other people in the vicinity of the work
 - Spraying screw holes or areas of slight damage with water



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- Sealing the edges of boards with glue or acrylic paint
- c. Asbestos insulation board – for major activities:
- Similar precautions as for asbestos insulation and sprayed coatings
 - The working area must be enclosed, so far as is reasonably practicable
 - Full decontamination facilities must be provided and used
 - The working area must be cleaned by a special vacuum cleaner
 - Special marked containers must be used for the disposal of asbestos waste
 - Environmental sampling may be required.
- d. Asbestos cement
- This is less likely to generate dust than other asbestos products, but the risk of fibre release is still significant
 - Work methods must not create unnecessary dust – for instance, high pressure water jets, dry brushes and grinding discs, must not be used
 - In some situations, approved respirators and protective clothing may be necessary
7. Remember – asbestos cement sheeting is very fragile, so for roof work the priority is to safeguard the worker from the danger of falling.
8. Report any defect in the equipment or the system of work without delay.
9. At any location where asbestos is known to be present, a suitable warning sticker should be applied.



10. Any contractors working on site, must be informed of any known locations of asbestos containing material (ACM's), by means of a site plan.

