

# a17

## asbestos essentials

### Non-licensed tasks

This information will help employers and the self-employed to comply with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006.

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.

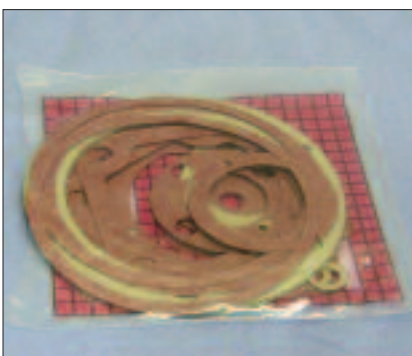
It can act as a risk assessment for asbestos if it matches what you plan to do.

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'.



## Removing asbestos paper linings

### What this sheet covers

This sheet describes good practice when you need to remove asbestos paper linings (eg from a boiler casing, beneath lino, or where asbestos paper separates easily from other materials).

This sheet is NOT appropriate for removing asbestos paper lagging. Use an HSE-licensed contractor for such work.

### Preparing the work area

- Restrict access - minimise the number of people present.
- Close doors. Use tape and notices to warn others.
- Ensure adequate lighting.

### Equipment

- 500-gauge polythene sheeting and duct tape;
- warning tape and notices;
- permanent sealant;
- sharp knife;
- garden-type sprayer containing wetting agent;
- paint brush;
- bucket of water and rags;
- asbestos waste container, eg labelled polythene sack; and
- 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.



Asbestos paper linings can be found in boiler casings, under lino or tiles and many other places. Paper gaskets can contain asbestos

### 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.
- ✓ Take asbestos waste to 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.

Electrical hazards - see [www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/index.htm](http://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.

### Procedure

- Isolate the power supply - use a competent electrician.
- Only work on a boiler that is cold.
- Protect nearby surfaces from contamination. Cover with 500-gauge polythene sheeting and fix with duct tape to non-asbestos surfaces.

### Removal

- Carefully remove the covering - dismantle metal covers on a boiler; ease back lino; etc.
- Protect vulnerable parts with polythene sheeting, fixed with tape to a non-asbestos surface.
- Dampen the exposed paper.
- If possible, remove the paper whole. Otherwise, cut the paper - don't tear it - and dampen as you remove it.
- Put the paper in the waste container.
- Brush any paper you can't remove with sealant.
- Brush the back surface of other material, eg lino, with sealant before disposal.



*If you can't remove the paper whole, cut it - don't tear - and dampen it as you go.*

### Cleaning and disposal

- Clean the equipment and the area with damp rags.
- Put debris, used rags, polythene sheeting, paintbrush 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

- **More asbestos pictures** - [www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/gallery.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/gallery.htm)
- **Help to decide if work is licensed** - [www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/licensing/index.htm](http://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/](http://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](http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/essentials/index.htm)
- See sheet a0 for details of more guidance.

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

### Download and follow these advice sheets from [www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/essentials/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/essentials/index.htm):

- em1 *What to do if you uncover or damage materials that could contain asbestos*
- em2 *Training*
- em5 *Wetting asbestos materials*
- 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 document is available at [www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/essentials/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/essentials/index.htm)

© *Crown copyright* If you wish to reuse this information visit [www.hse.gov.uk/copyright](http://www.hse.gov.uk/copyright) for details. First published as part of *Asbestos Essentials Task Manual 2001*.

Published by the Health and Safety Executive 03/11

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.