



Manage buildings?

You must manage asbestos



Why manage asbestos?

Asbestos must be properly managed to prevent people dying from asbestos diseases in the future. Workers who carry out building maintenance and repair are particularly at risk. Each year 1000 people who worked in such trades die from past exposures to asbestos fibres. And these workers are still at risk. Half a million commercial buildings still contain asbestos.

If you are responsible for managing the maintenance and repair of a building, you must manage any asbestos in it. As well as protecting people from exposure to asbestos fibres, you have a legal duty to manage asbestos (*under regulation 4 of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006*). Following the eight steps to managing asbestos set out in this leaflet will help you do this.

Does the duty to manage asbestos affect me?

Yes, if you are responsible for maintenance and repairs. You are a 'dutyholder' if:

- you own the building;
- you are responsible through a contract or tenancy agreement;
- there is no formal contract or agreement but you have control of the building;
- in a multi-occupied building, you are the owner and have taken responsibility for maintenance and repairs for the whole building.

If you are unsure whether you are a dutyholder - seek professional advice.

If you are not the dutyholder, but have information about the building, you must co-operate with the dutyholder, eg landlords must pass on relevant information to new tenants, and leaseholders must allow access for inspection by managing agents.

What buildings are affected?

- All non-domestic buildings, whatever the type of business.
- The common areas of residential rented buildings, eg halls, stair wells, lift shafts, roof spaces.

Who is most likely to disturb asbestos?

Workers who carry out maintenance and repair jobs such as cutting or drilling into walls, ceilings or partitions; repairing boilers; laying cables. Such workers include:

- construction and demolition contractors, roofers, electricians, painters and decorators, joiners, plumbers, gas fitters, plasterers, shop fitters, heating and ventilation engineers, and surveyors;
- electronics: phone and information technology engineers, alarm installers;
- general maintenance engineers and others who work on the fabric of a building.

Where are asbestos containing materials (ACMs) likely to be found?



Asbestos insulation on pipes



Asbestos insulating board ceiling tiles



Asbestos cement panels



Sprayed coatings on wall



Asbestos insulating board panels



Textured coating with asbestos

Asbestos has been used in many parts of buildings, below is a sample of uses and locations where asbestos can be found

Asbestos product	What it can be used for
Sprayed asbestos (limpet).	Fire protection in ducts and to structural steel work, fire breaks in ceiling voids etc.
Lagging.	Thermal insulation of pipes and boilers.
Insulating boards.	Fire protection, thermal insulation, wall partitions, ducts.
Asbestos cement products, flat or corrugated sheets.	Roofing and wall cladding, gutters, rainwater pipes, water tanks.
Certain textured coatings.	Decorative plasters, paints.
Asbestos ropes and cloth.	Gaskets, insulation, seals.

Eight steps to managing asbestos in buildings

Step 1

Are you responsible for maintenance and repair activities for non-domestic buildings, either through a contract or tenancy agreement, or because you own the building?

Yes

You are a dutyholder, and have a responsibility to manage asbestos.

Go to step 2

No

The person who is in charge should know where asbestos is. Ask them to show you the asbestos register or record.

Step 2

Was the building built before 2000?

Yes

Assume asbestos is present.

Go to step 3

No

Asbestos unlikely to be present. No action needed.

Step 5

Keep a written record or register

This needs to be easy to read. It could be a plan or diagram of the building, a written list or a computer-based record:

- record where the asbestos-containing material is, and its condition;
- record roles and responsibilities with regard to managing asbestos.

It is important that the record or register is easily accessible – particularly if it is being used to tell workers about the location of asbestos (see step 7).

Go to step 6

Step 6

Act on your findings

Draw up a priority action list:

- give high priority to damaged material and materials likely to be disturbed. These will need to be repaired, enclosed or removed using trained personnel – a licensed contractor may be required;
- if materials are in good condition and are unlikely to be disturbed – leave in place but regularly review their condition;
- record what you find and the action you take.

Go to step 7

Step 3

Do you already have information on asbestos in your building?

This may include previous asbestos surveys, building or insurance reports.

Use this information as a starting point.

Go to step 4

Step 4

Walk round your building

Identify all materials that may contain asbestos (eg insulating board, ceiling tiles and insulation on pipe work) including areas normally not visited, eg roof voids, store rooms etc. You can **either** presume that asbestos is present **or** confirm its presence/absence through use of a more detailed survey* and sampling.

If you opt to presume, any subsequent work should be carried out with full asbestos safety precautions.

If you are not confident to undertake this yourself – seek specialist advice.*

Go to step 5

Step 7

Tell people where the asbestos is

- Consider labelling potential ACMs.
- Consider who works on or near asbestos (maintenance workers/contractors).
- Tell them where the asbestos is before they start work (eg when you ask for a quote for a job) and agree the precautions that need to be taken to prevent exposure.
- Anyone who may work on asbestos must be trained and use safe working methods.
- Remember, some work requires a licence. If you are unsure what to do, seek professional advice.

Go to step 8

Step 8

Keep your records up to date

Even after your action list is completed you need to continue to manage risks:

- walk around your building at least once a year and update your plan as necessary;
- check materials regularly to see if they have deteriorated, been damaged or disturbed in any way;
- if you find deterioration.

Go to step 6

*If you choose to have a survey to identify asbestos, it is better to use an accredited company or someone who is certificated. A poor survey could end up costing more money in the long run.



If you need to have work done:

- all work with asbestos must be done by trained people using proper precautions;
- you need to use a licensed contractor to work on high-risk materials, such as pipe insulation, asbestos insulating panels or sprayed asbestos. For further information about licensed contractors check HSE's website or call HSE's Infoline Tel: 0845 345 0055 (see opposite for details);
- you need a trained contractor even for work on materials such as asbestos cement, textured coatings or vinyl tiles.

Remember – the duty is all about protecting yourself and other people from exposure to asbestos fibres by managing any asbestos present in a building properly. It is not about removing all asbestos! If the asbestos is in good condition and not likely to be disturbed, it is usually safer to leave it in place and manage it. Removal may be unnecessary and costly!

Concentrating on these eight practical steps should help you comply with the duty.

Need more information?

HSE priced and free publications are available by mail order from HSE Books, PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 2WA
Tel: 01787 881165 Fax: 01787 313995
Website: www.hsebooks.co.uk (HSE priced publications are also available from bookshops and free leaflets can be downloaded from HSE's website: www.hse.gov.uk.)

For information about the duty to manage asbestos, see HSE's asbestos web pages: www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/index.htm.

For free information sheets about working with asbestos, see: www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/essentials/index.htm.

The management of asbestos in non-domestic premises. Regulation 4 of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006. Approved Code of Practice and guidance L127 (Second edition) HSE Books 2006 ISBN 978 0 7176 6209 8

For information about health and safety ring HSE's Infoline Tel: 0845 345 0055
Fax: 0845 408 9566
Textphone: 0845 408 9577
e-mail: hse.infoline@natbrit.com or write to HSE Information Services, Caerphilly Business Park, Caerphilly CF83 3GG.

This leaflet contains notes on good practice which are not compulsory but which you may find helpful in considering what you need to do.

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Other useful contacts

Federation of Small Businesses

Head Office, Sir Frank Whittle Way, Blackpool Business Park, Blackpool, FY4 2FE
Tel: 01253 336000
Website: www.fsb.org.uk

Asbestos Testing and Consulting

237 Branston Road, Burton upon Trent, Staffordshire DE14 3BT
Tel: 01283 531126
Fax: 01283 568228
e-mail: info@atac.org.uk

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors

12 Great George Street, Parliament Square, London SW1P 3AD
Fax: 020 7334 3844
e-mail: asbestos@rics.org.uk

British Institute of Facilities Management

Number One Building, The Causeway, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 2ER
Tel: 0845 058 1356
e-mail: admin@bifm.org.uk
Website: www.bifm.org.uk

Trades Union Congress

Congress House, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3LS
Tel: 020 7636 4030
Fax: 020 7636 0632
Website: www.tuc.org.uk/asbestos

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