

# a12

## asbestos essentials

### Non-licensed tasks

#### Essential information

**Important:** You must read sheet a0 *Introduction to asbestos essentials*

Also read the following sheets:

**em0** Risk assessments and plans of work

**em1** What to do if you discover or accidentally disturb asbestos during your work

**em2** Information, instruction and training

**em6** Personal protective equipment (including RPE)

**em7** Using damp rags to clean surfaces of minor asbestos contamination

**em8** Personal decontamination

**em9** Disposal of asbestos waste

# Cleaning weathered asbestos cement (AC) roofing and cladding

### What this sheet covers

This sheet describes good practice when you need to clean AC cladding and roofing, either to improve its appearance or to prepare it for a surface coating.

This sheet is *not* appropriate for cleaning asbestos insulating board. Use an HSE-licensed contractor for such work.

### Preparing the work area

- Ensure safe access.
- Restrict access – minimise the number of people present.
- Use tape and notices to warn others.

### Equipment

- 500-gauge polythene sheeting and duct tape
- Warning tape and notices
- Approved biocide
- Scoop or trowel
- Scraper
- Proprietary cleaning machine
- Garden-type sprayer containing wetting agent
- Bucket of water and rags
- Asbestos waste bag
- Clear polythene bag



Moss and lichen growth on AC roofing and gutters

**Caution**

AC roofs are always fragile and cannot bear weight.

**Caution**

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

**Other hazards**

Work at height – see [www.hse.gov.uk/work-at-height](http://www.hse.gov.uk/work-at-height). Take precautions to avoid falls.

Work on fragile roofs – see [www.hse.gov.uk/construction](http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction). Fragile roofs cannot bear weight.

There may be other hazards – you need to consider them all.

**Personal protective equipment (PPE) – see sheet em6**

- Provide:
  - disposable overalls fitted with a hood (you may need waterproof overalls);
  - boots without laces (laced boots are hard to decontaminate);
  - protective gloves. Select single use gloves;
  - a disposable particulate respirator (eg FF P3) for manual scraping and for operating the filtration system.
- A respirator is not normally needed for an operator who is well away from the cleaning machine.

**Procedure**

- Prevent slurry entering the building. Seal gaps into the building with polythene sheeting, secured with duct tape.
- If necessary, remove debris first – see sheet a11.
- Only in exceptional circumstances is high-pressure jetting appropriate. This requires a specialist contractor.

**Method 1: Cleaning cladding accessible from ground level**

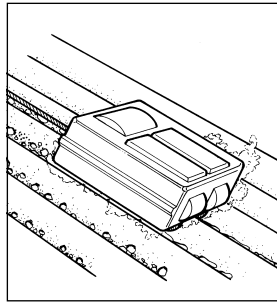
- Prepare the biocide according to the instructions on the label. Apply it by low-pressure sprayer.
- Allow time for the biocide to work – check the product label.
- Keep the surface wet and remove growths by gentle scraping. Dead plant roots are hard to remove – leave these in place.
- Scoop debris into the asbestos waste bag.

**Method 2: Employ a specialist roof cleaning contractor with a cleaning machine**

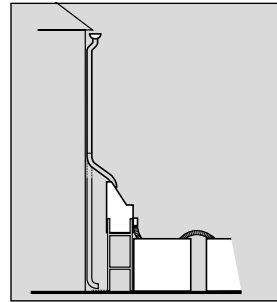
- This method creates a lot of slurry that must be collected for disposal.
- The contractor should:
  - divert the slurry through a collection and filtration system;
  - keep solid waste wet and put it in the waste bag;
  - flush out the slurry collector with clean water.

**Cleaning and disposal**

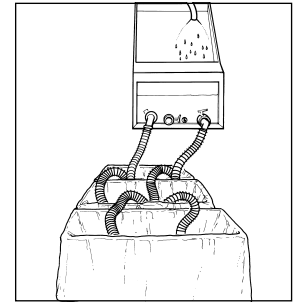
- Clean the equipment and the area with damp rags.
- Put debris, used rags, polythene sheeting, paintbrush and other waste in the asbestos waste bag and tape it closed.
- Put the asbestos waste bag in a clear polythene bag and tape it closed.
- Disposal – see sheet em9.



Cleaning machine



The contractor should use a collection and filter system



## Personal decontamination

See sheet em8.

## Clearance and checking off

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

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