Removing asbestos friction linings

What this sheet covers

This sheet describes good practice when you need to remove a friction lining containing asbestos (e.g., brake assembly, clutch housing) or when the housing needs cleaning.

Preparation the work area

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

Equipment

- 500-gauge polythene sheeting and duct tape;
- warning tape and notices;
- Class H vacuum cleaner (BS 8520) - see sheet em4;
- scraper;
- bucket of water and rags;
- asbestos waste container, e.g., 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.

Procedure

- Protect nearby surfaces from contamination. Cover with 500-gauge polythene sheeting and fix with duct tape to non-asbestos surfaces.

Removal

- Partially open the housing and vacuum the inside.
- Open the housing carefully. Use damp rags to clean inside.
- Put the worn friction lining and dirty rags in the waste container.
- Scrape off any residues using ‘shadow vacuuming’ - see sheet em4.
- If necessary, replace it with non-asbestos material.

Caution: Never use a brush or compressed air for cleaning.
Cleaning and disposal

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

- 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.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Download and follow these advice sheets from www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/essentials/index.htm:

- em1 What to do if you uncover or damage materials that could contain asbestos
- em2 Training
- em4 Using a Class H vacuum cleaner for asbestos
- 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 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.

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.

This document is available at www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/essentials/index.htm

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