Removing an asbestos fire blanket

What this sheet covers
This sheet describes good practice when you need to remove an asbestos fire blanket, or replace it with a non-asbestos blanket.

Preparing the work area
- Restrict access – minimise the number of people present.
- Ensure adequate lighting.

Equipment
- Suitable non-asbestos replacement fire blanket
- Garden-type sprayer containing wetting agent
- Bucket of water and rags
- Asbestos waste bag
- Clear polythene bag

Personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Provide:
  - disposable overalls fitted with a hood;
  - boots without laces (laced boots are hard to decontaminate).
- A respirator is not normally required.

Procedure
Removal
- Where the blanket and container are no longer needed, unscrew the box from the wall and put it, with the blanket inside, into the waste container.
- For a blanket in a box with opening base, open the front and dampen with spray.
- Slide the blanket into the asbestos waste bag.
- For a blanket in a circular cylinder, first dampen the blanket. Spray up into the container.
- Avoid over-wetting and creating a pool of water.
- Pull the blanket out, into the asbestos waste bag.
Caution

Never unravel or shake an asbestos fire blanket.

Other hazards

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

Cleaning and disposal

- Clean inside any container that remains, with damp rags.
- Clean the floor beneath the container with damp rags.
- Put used rags 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.

Personal decontamination

See sheet em8.

Clearance and checking off

- Visually inspect inside the container and the floor beneath it to make sure that these have 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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