Removing a single (screwed-in) asbestos insulating board (AIB) ceiling tile

What this sheet covers
This sheet describes good practice when you need to remove a single AIB ceiling tile.

This sheet is not appropriate:
- for the removal of AIB slats;
- where the tile has more than minor damage;
- where the tile is heavily painted so its removal could damage adjacent tiles;
- if work lasts more than one hour for one worker in a seven-day period, or exceeds two hours for two or more workers in a seven-day period (this includes time to set up, dismantle and clean the mini-enclosure).

Use an HSE-licensed contractor for such work.

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

Equipment
- Method 1: 500-gauge polythene sheeting and duct tape
- Method 2: Use a mini-enclosure if available – if not, use timber or other framework with 1000-gauge polythene sheeting and duct tape – see sheet em3
- 1000-gauge polythene sheeting and duct tape
- Warning tape and notices
- Class H vacuum cleaner (BS 8520) – see sheet em4
- Sealant, eg polyvinyl acetate (PVA)
- Magnet
- Screwdriver
- Non-asbestos replacement ceiling tile
- Garden-type sprayer containing wetting agent
- Bucket of water and rags

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
- em3 Building and dismantling a mini-enclosure
- em4 Using a Class H vacuum cleaner for asbestos
- em5 Wetting asbestos materials
- 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
Other hazards

Work at height – see www.hse.gov.uk/work-at-height. Take precautions to avoid falls.

Manual handling – see www.hse.gov.uk/msd. Plan how to remove and handle heavy material and articles safely.

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

- Asbestos waste bag
- Clear polythene bag

Protect nearby areas with polythene sheeting or a mini-enclosure. Use shadow vacuuming to control dust when removing screws.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) – see sheet em6

- Provide:
  - disposable overalls fitted with a hood;
  - boots without laces (laced boots are hard to decontaminate);
  - respiratory protective equipment (RPE).

Method 1: Removing a single ceiling tile less than 0.36 m² in area (eg 60 cm x 60 cm)

Procedure

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

Removal

- Locate steel screws with the magnet. Locate brass screws by careful paint scraping.
- Use ‘shadow vacuuming’ to control dust – see sheet em4.
- Unscrew – put the screws in the waste bag.
- Carefully lower one end of the tile. Vacuum its upper surface.
- Spray the upper surface with PVA.
- Keep the tile flat and lower it gently.
- Place the tile in the asbestos waste bag.
- If asbestos fillets are present, seal with a sealant.
- Fix a new non-asbestos tile by attaching it to a non-asbestos surface, not to asbestos fillets.
Method 2: Removing a single ceiling tile more than 0.36 m² in area (eg 60 cm x 60 cm)

Procedure
- Erect a proprietary ‘mini-enclosure’, or build one as described in sheet em3.

Removal
- Follow the removal instructions for method 1.
- Double-wrap the tile in 1000-gauge polythene sheeting.

Cleaning and disposal
- Clean a mini-enclosure with the Class H vacuum cleaner and dismantle it as advised in sheet em3.
- Clean the area and equipment with the Class H vacuum cleaner and damp rags.
- Put used rags, polythene sheeting 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 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.