

a35

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

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

Replacing an asbestos cement (AC) flue or duct

What this sheet covers

This sheet describes good practice when you need to mend urgently, then replace, an asbestos cement flue or air duct.

Sometimes, the joints are sealed with asbestos string.

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

- Mini-enclosure for nailed-on asbestos insulating board – see sheet em3
- 500- and 1000-gauge polythene sheeting and duct tape
- Warning tape and notices
- Class H vacuum cleaner (BS 8520) (if available – see sheet em4)
- Screwdriver
- Hammer
- Non-asbestos replacement flue/duct and sealant
- Garden-type sprayer containing wetting agent
- Bucket of water and rags
- Asbestos waste bag
- Clear polythene bag
- Asbestos warning stickers

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).



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.

Slips and trips – see www.hse.gov.uk/slips. Floors protected with polythene become very slippery when wet.

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

Caution

Also remove asbestos fragments that fall down the flue/duct.

Procedure

- Dampen any AC debris with spray.
- Pick up larger pieces of debris. Put them in the asbestos waste bag.
- Clean contaminated surfaces with damp rags, then put these in the asbestos waste bag.
- Protect surfaces from further contamination – cover with 500-gauge polythene sheeting and fix with duct tape to non-asbestos surfaces.

Emergency repair (eg one to two days only)

- Wrap the duct or flue with duct tape – replace the part as soon as possible.

Replacement

- Turn off equipment vented by the flue or fed by the duct.
- If hot, wait for the flue to cool.
- Dampen the AC flue/duct and joint seals.
- If the section can be removed intact, strengthen the damaged sections with duct tape.
- If it cannot be removed intact, wrap the section in 1000-gauge polythene and break it into large pieces with a hammer.
- Dampen any asbestos string seal. Ease it away with the screwdriver into the waste bag.
- Gently scrape off residues using ‘shadow vacuuming’ (if Class H vacuum available – see sheet em4).
- Double-wrap the damaged flue/duct with 1000-gauge polythene sheeting and seal with duct tape. Attach asbestos warning stickers.
- Install the replacement non-asbestos flue/duct.



This section of AC ducting has already been labelled



Sometimes the joints are sealed with asbestos string

Cleaning and disposal

- Clean the area and equipment with the Class H vacuum cleaner (if available) and damp rags.
- Put debris, 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.

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