

# a37

## 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

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

**em8** Personal decontamination

**em9** Disposal of asbestos waste

# Removing asbestos-containing mastic, sealant, beading, filler, putty or fixing

### What this sheet covers

This sheet describes good practice when you need to remove mastics etc that contain asbestos. If you also need to remove small areas of textured coating, see sheet a28.

This sheet is *not* appropriate if the material is attached to asbestos insulating board or lagging. Use an HSE-licensed contractor.

### 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

- 500-gauge polythene sheeting and duct tape
- Warning tape and notices
- Class H vacuum cleaner (BS 8520) – see sheet em4
- Sealant, eg polyvinyl acetate (PVA)
- Scraper, trowel, hand drill, paintbrush
- Heat source (for some mastics)
- Bucket of water and rags
- Paintbrush
- 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.



**Caution**

Don't use power tools.

**Other hazards**

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



Tape mastic

**Procedure**

- Protect nearby surfaces from contamination. Cover with 500-gauge polythene sheeting and fix with duct tape to non-asbestos surfaces.
- Can you remove the part rather than scraping off the asbestos-containing material?
- Gently scrape up adhering mastic. You can soften mastic with solvent, by warming with an infra-red lamp, or embrittle it with dry ice.
- Scrape off mastic into the asbestos waste bag.
- Dampen plaster-based materials thoroughly with water and scrape off using 'shadow vacuuming' – see sheet em4.
- For asbestos 'Rawlplugs', dampen and drill out using 'shadow vacuuming'.
- Paint newly exposed surfaces with sealant.

**Cleaning and disposal**

- Clean the area and equipment with the Class H vacuum cleaner and 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.

**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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