

# a31

## 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

# Removing a single asbestos-containing gas or electric heater

### What this sheet covers

This sheet describes good practice when you need to remove:

- a single gas heater (catalytic, radiant, coal- or log-effect);
- an electric heater (storage, radiant etc).

This sheet is *not* appropriate if the work involves asbestos insulating board and the 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. Use an HSE-licensed contractor for such work.

You must use a Gas Safe-registered engineer to disconnect and make safe gas appliances.

### Preparing the work area

- Have a competent electrician to isolate the appliance from the electricity supply.
- You must have a Gas Safe-registered engineer to disconnect gas appliances and make them safe.
- Restrict access – minimise the number of people present.
- Close doors. Use tape and notices to warn others.
- Ensure adequate lighting.

### Equipment

- 500- and 1000-gauge polythene sheeting and duct tape
- Warning tape and notices
- Class H vacuum cleaner (BS 8520) – see sheet em4
- Screwdriver and spanners
- Garden-type sprayer containing wetting agent
- Bucket of water and rags
- Asbestos waste bag
- Clear polythene bag
- Asbestos warning stickers

### Other hazards

Electrical hazards – see [www.hse.gov.uk/electricity](http://www.hse.gov.uk/electricity). Get a competent electrician to isolate and reconnect electricity supply.

Manual handling – see [www.hse.gov.uk/msd](http://www.hse.gov.uk/msd). Plan how to remove and handle heavy material and articles safely.

Gas safety – check your contractor's registration at [www.gassaferegister.co.uk/](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk/).

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

### Caution

Some catalytic heaters contain loose asbestos mats.

### 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).

### Procedure

- Can you remove and dispose of the appliance intact?

### Preparation

- Remove furniture and fittings from the area, or protect them from contamination using 500-gauge polythene sheet.
- Protect nearby surfaces from contamination. Cover with 500-gauge polythene sheeting and fix with duct tape to non-asbestos surfaces.
- Check if the appliance is attached to asbestos insulating board (AIB); sometimes this is wall-mounted behind heaters.

### Removal

- Remove the cover, wipe it with damp rags and set it aside.
- Vacuum inside the appliance. Vacuuming should remove all loose material or articles.
- Dampen the parts that may contain asbestos, eg panels, board, paper, string and fire cement.
- Unscrew or unbolt fixed parts using shadow vacuuming – see sheet em4. Put the fixings in the asbestos waste bag.
- Remove panels or parts intact and put them in the asbestos waste bag.
- Vacuum inside the carcass before removal. If it is attached to AIB, unscrew it using shadow vacuuming. Put the screws in the asbestos waste bag.
- If fixed to AIB, see sheet a6 for repairing minor damage.
- Double-wrap the carcass and the cover with 1000-gauge polythene sheeting. Seal with duct tape. Attach asbestos warning stickers.

### Cleaning and disposal

- Clean the equipment and the area with 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.

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