

Asbestos Policy

North West Facilities Ltd will take appropriate action to ensure the health and safety of staff and others who may be affected by the risks associated with asbestos containing materials present in grounds where grounds maintenance performed

For the purposes of this policy all types of asbestos will be treated the same and will be defined generally as the term asbestos.

North West Facilities policy is:

- To prevent, as far as is reasonable practicable, exposure to asbestos;
- To provide and maintain an asbestos register for all grounds maintained;
- To implement an effective and positive asbestos management strategy, based on risk assessment, to ensure that all asbestos containing materials will be: maintained in a sealed and safe condition; or isolated; or removed in accordance with on-going maintenance works;
- To appoint David Hartley Asbestos Supervising Officer to oversee the Management System;
- To direct resources that can be used effectively, in a planned and strategic manner;
- To freely provide information on asbestos;
- To promote awareness of asbestos and the NWF Asbestos Management System;
- To maintain the momentum in development of expertise and best practice;
- To regularly review the Asbestos Management System.

The Asbestos Management System comprises this policy; the Asbestos Management Plan, a clear and Unambiguous document which sets out the asbestos management options, timetables and Priorities for action, responsibilities and review procedures; and a set of Procedures detailing practical elements of the system such as undertaking work with asbestos and emergency procedures.

This Policy, the Procedures and Management Plan have been drawn up in accordance with the latest Regulations, Approved Codes of Practice and Guidance, regarding asbestos, from the Health and Safety Executive and will be reviewed at least annually and updated in the light of any future changes to these Regulations, Approved Codes of Practice or Guidance.

David Hartley

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ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Dangers of Asbestos

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral mined during the 20th century. Historically, its heat and sound resistance properties made it ideal for use in a variety of products and locations including the manufacturing of products such as pipe insulation, flooring materials, cement roofing, textured wall coating and other insulator products.

The use of asbestos declined in the 1980's but was banned in 1999 due to the dangers it presents. Due to its versatility it is present in some form in nearly all premises prior to 1999. Asbestos materials can still be readily found in a poor and dangerous condition.

Asbestos fibres may be released into the atmosphere and inhaled. Asbestos related diseases currently kill over 3,500 people each year with figures expected to rise. There is no known cure for asbestos-related diseases.

Anyone in the vicinity of asbestos fibre release may be at risk. Even low exposures may lead to cancers. This is why it is imperative that ACMs are identified within the workplace so that the threat of disturbance and fibre release is prevented.

Asbestos basics

Did you know that every week...

3 plumbers die
20 tradesmen die
6 electricians die
6 joiners die

...all from this hidden killer.

Asbestos was extensively used as a building material in the UK from the 1950s through to the mid-1980s. It was used for a variety of purposes and was ideal for fireproofing and insulation. Any building built before 2000 (houses, factories, offices, schools, hospitals etc) can contain asbestos. Asbestos materials in good condition are safe unless asbestos fibres become airborne, which happens when materials are damaged.

Why is asbestos dangerous?

Asbestos fibres are present in the environment in Great Britain so people are exposed to very low levels of fibres. However, a key factor in the risk of developing an asbestos-related disease is the total number of fibres breathed in. Working on or near damaged asbestos-containing materials or

breathing in high levels of asbestos fibres, which may be many hundreds of times that of environmental levels could increase your chances of getting an asbestos-related disease.

When these fibres are inhaled they can cause serious diseases which are responsible for around 4000 deaths a year. There are four main diseases caused by asbestos: mesothelioma (which is always fatal), lung cancer (almost always fatal), asbestosis (not always fatal, but it can be very debilitating) and diffuse pleural thickening (not fatal).

Remember, these diseases will not affect you immediately but later on in life, so there is a need for you to protect yourself now to prevent you contracting an asbestos-related disease in the future. It is also important to remember that people who smoke and are also exposed to asbestos fibres are at a much greater risk of developing lung cancer.

When am I at risk?

You are mostly at risk when:

- You are working on an unfamiliar site
- The building you are working on was built before the year 2000
- Asbestos-containing materials were not identified before the job was started
- Asbestos-containing materials were identified but this information was not passed on by the people in charge to the people doing the work
- You don't know how to recognise and work safely with asbestos
- You know how to work safely with asbestos but you choose to put yourself at risk by not following proper precautions, perhaps to save time or because no one else is following proper procedures

Remember, as long as the asbestos is not damaged or located somewhere where it can be easily damaged it won't be a risk to you.

- You can't see or smell asbestos fibres in the air.
- The effects of asbestos take many years to show up - avoid breathing it in now.
- Smoking increases the risk many times.
- Asbestos is only a danger when fibres are made airborne

Are you sure that you don't come in to contact with asbestos?

If you work in any of the following occupations, and are working on a building built or refurbished before 2000, you may come in to contact with asbestos:

- Heating and ventilation engineers
- Demolition workers
- Carpenters and joiners
- Plumbers
- Roofing contractors
- Painters and decorators
- Plasterers

- Construction workers
- Fire and burglar alarm installers
- Shop fitters
- Gas fitters
- Computer installers
- General maintenance staff eg caretakers
- Telecommunications engineers
- Building surveyors
- Cable layers
- Electricians

This list does not include all occupations where you may come in to contact with asbestos. Some of the places where you may find it can be found in our [interactive diagram](#)^[1].

It's not easy to tell asbestos from how it looks, and it needs to be properly identified in a specialist laboratory. But here are a few examples; some pictures are also featured in the asbestos [picture gallery](#)^[2]:

- Asbestos used as packing between floors and in partition walls
- Sprayed ('impet') asbestos on structural beams and girders
- Lagging on pipework, boilers, calorifiers, heat exchangers etc
- Asbestos insulating board - ceiling tiles, partition walls, service duct covers, fire breaks, heater cupboards, door panels, lift shaft lining, fire surrounds, soffits etc.
- Asbestos cement products such as roof and wall cladding, bath panels, boiler and incinerator flues, fire surrounds, gutters, rainwater pipes, water tanks etc.
- Other products such as floor tiles, mastics, sealants, rope seals and gaskets (in pipework etc.), millboard, paper products, cloth (fire blankets, etc.) and bituminous products (roofing felt, etc)

Some of the examples listed above can only be carried out by a contractor who has been granted a licence from HSE, details of this can be found in the [licensing section](#)^[3] of this website. Other jobs can be carried out using the [task sheets](#)^[4], (make sure you use the correct sheet for the job). Also check the [equipment and method sheets](#)^[5] for details on what to use and how.

How do I deal with asbestos waste?

Make sure you double-bag it and label as asbestos waste. You can then get in contact with the Local Authority or Environment Agency to find out if they will assist you in disposing of it, they may charge for this service. Alternatively, you can contact the [Environment Agency](#)^[6] or if based in Scotland, [SEPA](#)^[7]. The waste **must be** disposed of at a licensed tip.

Working with asbestos

Do:

- Stop and ask if you are suspicious something may be asbestos or if you think the work might need to be carried out by a [licensed contractor](#)^[1]

- Follow the plan of work and the [task guidance sheets](#)^[2]; make sure you use the right sheet for the job
 - Make sure you take account of other risks such as work at height
 - Use your protective equipment, including a suitable face mask, worn properly
 - Clean up as you go - stop waste building up
 - Make sure waste is double-bagged and is disposed of properly at a licensed tip
 - Wash before breaks and going home

Don't:

- Use methods that create a lot of dust, like using power tools
- Sweep up dust and debris - use a Type H vacuum cleaner or wet rags
- Take home overalls used for asbestos work
- Reuse disposable clothing or masks
- Smoke
- Eat or drink in the work area

What should those in charge of the job do?

They must:

- Find out if asbestos-containing materials are present and plan the work to avoid disturbing these materials if possible
- Ensure that anyone who is going to work on asbestos material is [trained properly](#)^[3] and is supervised
- Know what work can be carried out on asbestos-containing materials, ie does this work need to be carried out by [a contractor licensed by HSE](#)^[4]?
- Take account of other risks as well as asbestos, eg work at height, and take the precautions necessary to do the job safely
- Use the [equipment and method sheets](#)^[5] and the right [task sheet](#)^[6] to make sure that the job is carried out properly and that exposure to asbestos is kept as low as possible
- Prepare a plan of work, explaining what the job involves, the work procedures, and what controls to use
- Provide you with the right equipment, which is clean, in good working order, and protects you against asbestos
- Train you in using this equipment
- Make sure the work area is inspected visually at the end of the job, to check it's fit for reoccupation
- Make arrangements for the safe disposal of any asbestos waste
- Consult the health and safety representative (if there is one)

What does the law require?

There are a number of sets of regulations, which cover work with all types of asbestos-containing material; they place duties on ['dutyholders'](#)^[7], employers and the self employed. A quick summary of these regulations can be found in the [asbestos regulations](#)^[8] section of this website

Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006

The [Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006](#)^[1] came into force on 13 November 2006 (Asbestos Regulations - SI 2006/2739)

These Regulations bring together the three previous sets of Regulations covering the prohibition of asbestos, the control of asbestos at work and asbestos licensing.

The Regulations prohibit the importation, supply and use of all forms of asbestos. They continue the ban introduced for blue and brown asbestos in 1985 and for white asbestos in 1999. They also continue to ban the second-hand use of asbestos products such as asbestos cement sheets and asbestos boards and tiles; including panels which have been covered with paint or textured plaster containing asbestos.

REMEMBER: The ban applies to new use of asbestos. If existing asbestos containing materials are in good condition, they may be left in place, their condition monitored and managed to ensure they are not disturbed.

Duty to manage asbestos

The Asbestos Regulations also include the 'duty to manage asbestos' in non-domestic premises. Guidance on the duty to manage asbestos can be found in the [Approved Code of Practice The Management of Asbestos in Non-Domestic Premises, L127, ISBN 9780 7176 6209 8](#)^[2] and on the [duty to manage](#)^[3] area of this website.

Training

The Regulations require mandatory training for anyone liable to be exposed to asbestos fibres at work (see regulation 10). This includes maintenance workers and others who may come into contact with or who may disturb asbestos (eg cable installers) as well as those involved in asbestos removal work.

Working with asbestos

When work with asbestos or which may disturb asbestos is being carried out, the Asbestos Regulations require employers and the self-employed to prevent exposure to asbestos fibres. Where this is not reasonably practicable, they must make sure that exposure is kept as low as reasonably practicable by measures other than the use of respiratory protective equipment. The spread of asbestos must be prevented. The Regulations specify the work methods and controls that should be used to prevent exposure and spread.

Worker exposure must be below the airborne exposure limit (Control Limit). The Asbestos Regulations have a single Control Limit for all types of asbestos of 0.1 fibres per cm³. A Control Limit is a maximum concentration of asbestos fibres in the air (averaged over any continuous 4 hour period) that must not be exceeded.

In addition, short term exposures must be strictly controlled and worker exposure should not exceed 0.6 fibres per cm³ of air averaged over any continuous 10 minute period using respiratory protective equipment if exposure cannot be reduced sufficiently using other means.

Respiratory protective equipment is an important part of the control regime but it must not be the sole measure used to reduce exposure and should only be used to supplement other measures. Work methods that control the release of fibres such as those detailed in the [Asbestos Essentials task sheets](#)^[4] for non-licensed work should be used. Respiratory protective equipment must be suitable, must fit properly and must ensure that worker exposure is reduced as low as is reasonably practicable.

Asbestos removal

Most asbestos removal work must be undertaken by a licensed contractor but any decision on whether particular work is licensable is based on the risk. Work is only exempt from licensing if:

- the exposure of employees to asbestos fibres is sporadic and of low intensity (but exposure cannot be considered to be sporadic and of low intensity if the concentration of asbestos in the air is liable to exceed 0.6 fibres per cm³ measured over 10 minutes); and
- it is clear from the risk assessment that the exposure of any employee to asbestos will not exceed the control limit; and the work involves:
 - Short, non-continuous maintenance activities. Work can only be considered as short, non-continuous maintenance activities if any one person carries out work with these materials for less than one hour in a seven-day period. The total time spent by all workers on the work should not exceed a total of two hours, [i]
 - removal of materials in which the asbestos fibres are firmly linked in a matrix. Such materials include: asbestos cement; textured decorative coatings and paints which contain asbestos; articles of bitumen, plastic, resin or rubber which contain asbestos where their thermal or acoustic properties are incidental to their main purpose (eg vinyl floor tiles, electric cables, roofing felt) and other insulation products which may be used at high temperatures but have no insulation purposes, for example gaskets, washers, ropes and seals,
 - encapsulation or sealing of asbestos-containing materials which are in good condition; or
 - air monitoring and control, and the collection and analysis of samples to find out if a specific material contains asbestos.

Under the Asbestos Regulations, anyone carrying out work on asbestos insulation, asbestos coating or asbestos insulating board (AIB) needs a licence issued by HSE unless they meet one of the exemptions above.

REMEMBER: Although you may not need a licence to carry out a particular job, you still need to comply with the rest of the requirements of the Asbestos Regulations.

If the work is licensable you have a number of additional duties. You need to:

- notify the enforcing authority responsible for the site where you are working (for example HSE or the local authority);
- designate the work area (see regulation 18 for details);
- prepare specific asbestos emergency procedures; and
- pay for your employees to undergo medical surveillance.

The Asbestos Regulations require any analysis of the concentration of asbestos in the air to be measured in accordance with the 1997 WHO recommended method.

From 6 April 2007, a clearance certificate for re-occupation may only be issued by a body accredited to do so. At the moment, such accreditation can only be provided by the [United Kingdom Accreditation Service \(UKAS\)](#)^[5].

You can find more details of how to undertake work with asbestos-containing materials, the type of controls necessary, what training is required and analytical methods in the following HSE publications:

- [Approved Code of Practice Work with Materials containing Asbestos, L143, ISBN 978 0 7176 6206 7](#)^[6]
- Asbestos: the Licensed Contractors Guide, HSG247, ISBN 978 0 7176 2874 2
- Asbestos: The analysts' guide for sampling, analysis and clearance procedures, HSG248, ISBN 978 0 7176 2875 9
- Asbestos Essentials, HSG 210, ISBN 978 0 7176 6263 0 (Asbestos Essentials task sheets are available on the Asbestos Essentials area of this website).

REMEMBER: You must also comply with other health and safety legislation. [ii]

Notes

1. It is important that the amount of time you or your employees spend working with asbestos insulation, asbestos coatings or AIB is managed to make sure that these time limits are not exceeded. This includes the time for activities such as building enclosures and cleaning.
2. For example, the [Construction \(Design and Management\) Regulations 2007 \(CDM\)](#)^[7] The term 'construction' includes demolition, refurbishment, most maintenance activities as well as new build projects.
 - [More on the revised CDM Regulations](#)^[8].

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