



Asbestos Policy

ARRANGEMENT FOR NOT DISTURBING ASBESTOS

1. Ensure an asbestos survey has been received prior to works commencing on all planned maintenance projects (e.g. Voids and Decent Homes Kitchens and Bathrooms)
2. Make sure the survey is conveyed to all workers and kept on site / in the residents property
3. Label any ACM's so it is clear this is material that cannot be worked on
4. Ensure all operatives have been Asbestos Awareness trained within the last 12 months.

PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH SUSPICIOUS MATERIALS

On discovery or disturbance of ACMs, or any other suspicious material, the following procedure must be followed:

1. **Stop work.**
2. Inform others locally not to further disturb the material.
3. Where appropriate, seal and cordon off the area and display appropriate warning signage.
4. Where appropriate, follow decontamination procedure as per the emergency procedures in the plan of work.
5. Inform the senior person on site who will assess the situation and call for advice and assistance where appropriate.
6. Do not return to task until the area is given the all clear and you are instructed to do so.

The work area must be quarantined (with measures being taken to ensure that there is no further contamination) until such time as the material has been analysed to establish its nature and appropriate remedial action is taken.



INTRODUCTION

Breathing in air containing asbestos fibres can lead to asbestos related diseases, mainly cancers of the lung and chest lining. Past exposure to asbestos is currently believed to kill 3,000 – 4,000 people in a year in this country and this number is expected to increase over the next 10 years. There is no cure for asbestos related disease.

Asbestos is only a risk to health if asbestos fibres are released into the air and breathed in.

Although it has been illegal to use asbestos in the construction or refurbishment of any premises for several years, many thousands of tonnes were used in the past and much of it remains in place. If these materials remain in good condition and are not disturbed there is no risk to health of the premise's occupants or visitors. However, if damaged or disturbed, asbestos fibres can be released into the air and breathed in.

THE DUTY TO MANAGE ASBESTOS

The Control of Asbestos Regulations requires all persons who have maintenance or repair responsibilities for non-domestic premises to manage the risk from asbestos.

If you are this duty holder you must:

1. Find out whether your building contains asbestos and what condition it is in.
2. Assess the risk.
3. Prepare and implement a plan to manage that risk.

IDENTIFYING AND LOCATING ASBESTOS

The first step to preparing a suitable management plan is to take all reasonable steps to locate any asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) on the premises. This can be done in several ways:

- Inspect any building plans or other relevant documents such as builders' invoices or the health and safety file for details of materials used in construction or refurbishment.
- Carry out a thorough inspection of the premises both inside and out to identify ACMs.
- Consult architects, employees or safety representatives, who may have further information and who have a duty to co-operate and make this information available.

Should the age of the building or the information obtained provide strong evidence that no ACMs are present to the duty holder needs only to record why this evidence indicates no asbestos is present.

It should always be presumed that a material contains asbestos unless there is strong evidence to the contrary.

Prior to carrying out any inspection or survey, a risk assessment must be carried out of the likely hazards, such as from the use of any access equipment and exposure to asbestos.

In some cases where the premises are small and no maintenance work is planned it may be appropriate for the duty holder to carry out their own inspection. In all other cases a trained and competent person should be employed to carry out a survey.



The organisation instructed to carry out this survey should be able to produce evidence of their training, suitable liability insurance and confirmation that HSE guidance MDHS 100 "Surveying, Sampling and Assessment of Asbestos Containing Materials" is to be followed.

Where asbestos or materials presumed to contain asbestos are found this must be recorded and kept available to all persons on the premises. There may be areas inaccessible to the surveyor, such as ceiling voids, ducts or roofs; these areas should be recorded as presumed to contain asbestos unless there is strong evidence to the contrary.

HSG 264

There are now 2 types of survey – Management surveys and demolition surveys.

Management Survey.

A management survey is the standard survey. Its purpose is to locate, as far as reasonably practicable, the presence and extent of any suspect ACM's in the building which could be damaged or disturbed during normal occupancy, including foreseeable maintenance and installation, and to assess their condition.

The survey will often involve minor intrusive work and some disturbance. The extent of intrusion will vary between premises depending on what is reasonably practicable for individual properties.

Refurbishment & Demolition Survey

An R&D survey is required before any refurbishment or demolition work is carried out. This type of survey is used to locate and describe, as far as reasonably practicable, all ACM's in the area where the refurbishment work will take place or in the whole building if demolition is planned.

There is a specific requirement in CAR 2012 for all ACM's to be removed as far as reasonably practicable before major refurbishment.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

Once identified, the condition of the ACMs must be assessed. The duty holder should check whether the materials have become detached from their base, been damaged or have their coatings peeled and broken off, and if debris or dust can be found nearby.

The duty holder must next decide whether, due to the amount, condition and location of the ACMs identified there is a risk to people working on or near it. Factors to consider include:

- The amount and condition of asbestos.
- The location of the asbestos.
- Whether there is easy access to the asbestos.
- Whether the asbestos is likely to be disturbed by work processes or accidentally.
- The number of persons working nearby.
- Whether work or maintenance is planned in the vicinity.

If the asbestos is in good condition, not likely to be damaged, worked on or disturbed it is usually safer to leave it in place and manage it.



If it is decided to leave ACMs in place, a register should be drawn up detailing where all ACMs are to be found, including an annotated plan of the premises. Each ACM should be labelled and persons working within the premises advised of their presence. Furthermore a permit-to-work system should be adopted to prevent ACMs being disturbed during any future works.

If the asbestos is in poor condition or likely to be disturbed in any way it must either be repaired, encapsulated or removed by a competent contractor. This may need to be carried out by a licensed contractor.

The final steps are to check what has been done and regularly review and monitor the effectiveness of the plan. The duty holders must satisfy themselves that the ACMs have not deteriorated or are unlikely to be disturbed by a change in the type of occupancy or forthcoming works.

CHECKLIST

Find	You must check if materials containing asbestos are present.
Condition	You must check what condition the material is in.
Presume	You must assume the material contains asbestos unless you have strong evidence to the contrary.
Identify	If you are planning maintenance or refurbishment or if the material is in poor condition, you may wish to arrange for the material to be sampled by a specialist.
Record	You must record the location and condition of the material on a plan or drawing.
Assess	You must decide if the condition or location means the material is likely to be disturbed.
Plan	You must prepare and implement a plan to manage these risks.

ACTION PLAN

The following table indicates the recommended action to be taken should asbestos-containing materials be located within the premises.

Minor Damage <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The material should be repaired and/or encapsulated.• The condition of the material should be monitored at regular intervals.• The material should be labelled.• All persons should be informed of the presence of asbestos.	Good Condition <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The condition of the material should be monitored at regular intervals.• The material should be labelled.• All persons should be informed of the presence of asbestos.
Poor Condition <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Asbestos in poor condition should be removed.	Asbestos Disturbed <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Asbestos likely to be disturbed should be removed.



All work must be carried out in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations and may require a licensed contractor to undertake it.

DEALING WITH SUSPICIOUS MATERIALS

On discovery or disturbance of ACMs, or any other suspicious material, the following procedure must be followed:

1. Stop work.
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The work area must be quarantined (with measures being taken to ensure that there is no further contamination) until such time as the material has been analysed to establish its nature and appropriate remedial action is taken.

Dean Floyd
Managing Director

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