

a14

asbestos essentials

Non-licensed tasks

This information will help employers, including the self-employed, comply with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006, to control exposure and protect health. It is also useful for trade union representatives.

Asbestos fibre causes lung cancer and lung diseases.

This sheet describes good practice when you need to remove asbestos cement sheets, gutters, drains, ridge caps etc on a small scale.

It covers the points you need to follow to reduce exposure to an adequate level.

It is important to follow all the points, or use equally effective measures.

Only carry out this work if you are properly trained.

For larger scale work, eg demolition, read *Working with asbestos cement* - see 'Further information'.

This sheet is not appropriate for removal of asbestos insulating board. Use an HSE-licensed specialist contractor for such work.

Main points

- Asbestos fibres can kill.
- Keep exposures low using all the controls in this sheet.
- See also sheets em1, em2, em5, em6, em7 and em8.

Removing asbestos cement (AC) sheets, gutters, etc

Access

- Take precautions to prevent the risk of falling if this work is at height.
- Where necessary, erect an access platform.
- Minimise the number of people present.
- Restrict access - close doors, and use warning tape and notices.
- Ensure adequate lighting.

Equipment

- Access platform or scaffolding
- 500- and 1000-gauge polythene sheeting and duct tape;
- warning tape and notices;
- bolt cutter;
- garden type sprayer;
- bucket of water and rags;
- asbestos waste container, eg labelled polythene sack;
- lockable skip for larger quantities of waste; and
- asbestos warning stickers;

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

- Provide:
 - disposable overalls fitted with a hood (you may need waterproof overalls for work outside);
 - boots without laces (laced boots are hard to decontaminate); and
 - respiratory protective equipment - see sheet em6.



Procedure

- Protect surfaces in the restricted area from contamination. Cover with 500-gauge polythene sheeting and fix with duct tape.

Caution: It is dangerous to seal over exhaust vents from gas-fired equipment. Can the gas be turned off?

Overlaying

- Can you overlay the roof with non-asbestos material instead of removing the asbestos?
- If so, attach the material to existing purlins. Avoid drilling through the asbestos cement. If you cannot avoid this, see sheet A9.
- Note the presence of asbestos material, so it can be managed properly.