

# Health & Safety



## Asbestos Policy



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### Asbestos Policy

#### 1. Introduction

This document brings Fixfire® existing policy on work with asbestos into line with the requirements of the control of asbestos at work regulations which were revised in 2012. All previous policy documents on asbestos are now replaced by this document.

Staff involved with working with asbestos, supervising such work, should fully familiarise themselves with the contents of this document.

#### 2. Responsibilities

Fixfire® policy on asbestos intends to ensure so far as it is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees and others who may encounter or be exposed to asbestos.

Fixfire® policy on asbestos shall ensure that known and identified locations of asbestos are recorded and that any such asbestos information is made available to those persons who require it.

Procedures for risk assessment of works involving a likelihood of encountering Asbestos are to be established together with arrangements and measures to ensure the management and control of existing asbestos is carried out in accordance with the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2012.

The Director is responsible, so far as is reasonably practicable, for ensuring the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees in their respective departments. In particular they will:

- Prepare and revise as necessary department arrangements for the management and control of work involving asbestos.
- Ensure that adequate resources are made available to enable arrangements to be implemented. Arrangements should consider surveys, analysis and where necessary removal.
- Ensure appropriate training, information and instruction is provided for relevant employees in the form of training courses, seminars, information leaflets and booklets, and personal instruction as appropriate.
- Ensure that employees or relevant contractors are provided with appropriate information, instructions and training on work being undertaken in areas containing Asbestos.
- The Director shall be responsible for maintaining awareness of the locations, condition and control measures recommended to prevent risks to health and safety.

#### 3. What is Asbestos?

Asbestos is a general name applied to a group of related, naturally occurring fibrous minerals, which have been commonly used in a range of building and equipment materials.

There are three main types of asbestos:

- Chrysotile – white
- Amosite - brown
- Crocidolite - blue

In addition legal provision also covers the following:

- Fibrous actinolite
- Fibrous anthophyllite



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- Fibrous tremolite

And any mixture containing any of those minerals.

Asbestos containing products have been widely used in buildings as construction materials, fireproofing, thermal insulation, electrical insulation, sound insulation, decorative plasters, roofing products, flooring products, heat resistant materials, gaskets, friction products etc. Since 1985 the new use of any material containing blue or brown asbestos has been banned. By 1999 the new use of any building materials containing white asbestos had been banned.

#### 4. Health Effects of Asbestos

All asbestos fibres, blue, brown and white are dangerous although the control limit for exposure to blue and brown fibres is lower than for white. There is no safe form of asbestos although products where the fibres are tightly bonded (e.g. asbestos cement) are less likely to shed fibres than products where the fibres are more loosely bonded (e.g. asbestos insulating board). The main route of entry to the body for asbestos is by inhalation of fibres.

There is no safe exposure level known for asbestos and once asbestos related diseases occur there is no known cure.

There are three main types of serious health risks associated with exposure to asbestos fibres:

**Asbestosis** – chronic obstructive lung disease

**Lung cancer** – a fatal lung disease

**Mesothelioma** – a fatal cancer of the outer lining of the lung specific to asbestos exposure.

#### 5. Legislation

This policy is based on the following legislation and shall be amended in line with any changes.

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2012
- The Asbestos Prohibitions Regulations
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as Amended)
- The Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015.

#### 6. The Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations

These are substantial regulations incorporating an Approved Code of Practice and were last updated in 2012.

They apply to everyone at risk from work with asbestos and extend statutory protection to all those who encounter asbestos at work or are affected by work activities involving it.

Key features of the regulations are:

- Taking reasonable steps to find asbestos containing materials in premises and checking their condition.
- Presuming materials contain asbestos unless there is strong evidence to suppose they do not.
- Keeping an up to date written record of the location and condition of the asbestos containing materials
- Assessing the risk of exposure to asbestos containing materials



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- Preparing and implementing a plan to manage the risk.

Other provisions include providing protective equipment, face fitting of respirators, keeping plant and equipment clean, providing information, training and necessary labelling.

## 7. Policy Application

The arrangements detailed consist of a series of procedures which are intended to safeguard persons who may encounter the possibility of discovering asbestos in the course of their work and to ensure the safety of any premises occupants who may be affected by any associated works which may involve the disturbance of asbestos containing materials.

All reasonable practicable steps will be taken to ensure that Fixfire® employees, tenants and contractors working on behalf of the Fixfire® will not be exposed to hazards associated with materials containing materials.

## 8. Asbestos Surveys

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) publication MDHS 100 (surveying, sampling and assessment of asbestos containing materials) sets out how to survey workplace premises for asbestos containing materials and how to record the results in a usable form.

There are three types of survey referred to in MDHS 100:

**Type 1 survey:** Location and assessment survey (presumptive survey) The purpose of this survey is to locate, as far as is reasonably practicable, the presence and extent of any suspect asbestos containing materials and assess their condition.

**Type 2 survey:** Standard sampling, identification and assessment survey (sampling survey). The purpose and procedures used in this survey are the same as for type 1 except that representative samples are taken and analysed for the presence of asbestos. Samples from each type of suspect Asbestos Containing Material found are collected and analysed to confirm or refute the surveyor's judgement. If the material sampled is found to contain asbestos, other similar homogenous materials used in the same way in the building can be strongly presumed to contain asbestos.

**Type 3 survey:** Full access sampling and identification survey (pre demolition/major refurbishment survey). This type of survey is used to locate as far as is reasonably practicable, all ACM in the building and may involve destructive inspection, as necessary to gain access to all areas, including those that may be difficult to reach. A full sampling programme is undertaken to identify possible ACM's and estimates of the volume and surface area of ACM made. The survey is designed to be used as a basis for tendering the removal of ACM's prior to demolition or major refurbishment, so the survey does not assess the condition of the asbestos, other than to note areas of damage or where additional asbestos debris may be expected to be present.

## 9. Bulk Sampling and Analysis

Representative bulk samples shall be taken by a licensed contractor to confirm or refute the presence of asbestos containing materials.

Samples shall be taken when no occupants are present in the area or when the building is empty.

Sampling will not be carried out where there is an electrical hazard or if it will damage the critical integrity of a roof,



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gutter pipe etc.

After sampling any friable or broken material will be sealed whilst the samples shall be double sealed in polythene bags.

Analysis for the identification of asbestos fibres in bulk samples will be undertaken by a laboratory in accordance with the HSE publication MDHS 77. In addition, the laboratory shall be accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS).

## 10. Asbestos Licensed Contractors

A system of vetting and appointing suitable applicants for inclusion on the Council's standing list of asbestos contractors is operated. Contractors carrying out work on behalf of the Council are subject to performance monitoring and recording.

Only contractors who have been vetted and approved by Fixfire® shall be eligible to tender for asbestos work. Contractors shall be reviewed every five years.

Fixfire® shall ensure that prior to any asbestos removal works being undertaken, the appointed contractors provide all relevant documentation required for works with asbestos.

This shall include:

- ASB5 notification form and plan of work
- Asbestos license
- Company insurance document
- Company Health and Safety policy
- CDM Health and Safety plan as notified to the HSE
- Training records
- Medical Certificates
- RPE face fit test certificates
- Plant examination and test certificates
- Permit to work
- COSHH data
- Waste disposal arrangements

Documentation required on completion of the removal works shall include:

- Site diary
- Site induction records
- Daily enclosure and air lock inspection records
- Daily negative pressure units and vacuum inspection records
- Respirator inspection records
- Daily decontamination unit inspection records
- Operative showering records
- Working platform inspections



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- Air monitoring and clearance certificates
- Personal air monitoring records
- Asbestos exposure records
- Waste consignment notes

## 11. Disposal of Asbestos Waste

The Environmental Agency requires a minimum of three days notification prior to the disposal of asbestos containing materials.

All asbestos containing material shall be disposed of by double wrapping in labeled 1000-gauge polythene sheeting or bags, and transported by a registered carrier to a landfill site licensed to receive asbestos waste - all in accordance with the Special Waste Regulations 1996.

The disposal of asbestos material shall be the responsibility of the appointed contractor. As such, evidence of appropriate documentation for the consignment and disposal of asbestos waste shall be required prior to award of contract.

## 12. Training

All staff who may encounter asbestos during the course of their work shall be given the necessary training to be able to identify the situations in which asbestos may be present, to be able to recognise asbestos or similar suspect materials and to set out safe working practice to minimise risks to health and safety.

Supplementary information will be provided on a periodic basis using information supplied from HSE publications and Croner or other proprietary information service.

Induction training will be provided to all new staff.

