

# Asbestos



**DANGER**

**ASBESTOS**

CANCER AND LUNG DISEASE HAZARD

**AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY**

**RESPIRATORS AND PROTECTIVE CLOTHING  
ARE REQUIRED IN THIS AREA**

# Asbestos

## Asbestos in Buildings

It's the fibres you can't see that if inhaled can lead to several asbestos related diseases. Past exposure to asbestos kills around 3000 people a year and this number is expected to rise further. The exposure to asbestos for most of these cases will have occurred in the past however the potential for further exposure in uncontrolled situations still exists and controls are required to prevent this.

With well in excess of two thousand known applications asbestos is frequently encountered within buildings. As a result many routine activities can bring workers into close proximity to asbestos containing materials. Often the material will be in a safe condition, however, where disturbed or in poor condition asbestos fibres can be released placing workers at risk.

## Legislation and Guidance

The Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations require all duty holders to identify, record and manage any asbestos within their buildings. The statutory obligation placed on the duty holder is to:

- Prepare and maintain a record of the location, amount and condition of any asbestos containing materials and to assume that materials contain asbestos unless they can be proven not to.
- Assess the risk from the material.
- Prepare a risk management plan.
- Review and monitor the risk management plan and the arrangements made for its effective operation.
- Provide information on the location and condition of asbestos containing materials to anyone liable to work on or disturb it.

In essence these obligations rest with all persons or organisations having maintenance and repair responsibility under the terms of lease agreements or having freehold property.

## Surveys

All premises should have in place an asbestos register based on a thorough survey. Surveys should follow the guidelines published by the Health and Safety Executive in Guidance Note MDHS 100: Surveying, Sampling and Assessment of Asbestos Containing Materials in Premises for Management Plans. This defines three survey types.

### Presumptive Survey - Type 1

This comprises a walk-through survey involving visual inspection of accessible areas but does not include sampling of suspect materials.

### Standard Sampling, Identification and Assessment Survey - Type 2

This comprises a visual inspection of accessible areas and collection of representative samples for analysis for the presence of asbestos. This type of survey is most appropriate for establishing the extent of asbestos containing materials present for inclusion in the management plan.

### Full Access Sampling and Identification Survey - Type 3

This type of survey appropriate in advance of refurbishment or demolition works. It is used to locate and describe, as far as is reasonably practicable, all asbestos containing materials in the building and may involve destructive inspection to gain access to all areas.

## Management

Once asbestos containing materials are identified or presumed as present they should be included in a risk management plan.

Operators should be aware of their responsibilities or seek competent advice and support on managing asbestos. There is a requirement to retain records of removal and other activities undertaken.

## First Environment Provides

First Environment provides the technical expertise to assist client organisations to manage asbestos in buildings. Including

- Surveys for asbestos containing materials.
- Asbestos sampling.
- Preparation of asbestos registers.
- Advice in selection of removal, control and management strategies.
- Project management of asbestos removal.
- Preparation of policy documents and record systems.
- Independent on-going inspection and audit.

As an independent company First Environment is able to consider all available options and assist our clients in implementing the most appropriate strategy for the management of asbestos.

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