

Asbestos

Policy

Introduction

Asbestos is the largest single cause of work-related fatal disease and ill health in Great Britain. It is a carcinogen and is responsible for lung diseases such as Asbestosis and Mesothelioma. Almost all asbestos-related deaths and ill health are a result of exposure that happened decades ago.

Asbestos containing materials (ACMs) were used in the construction industry for many years, primarily to deter the spread of fire or for their insulation properties. Although the use of such materials is now prohibited by legislation, they may exist in many older premises. Their presence needs to be effectively managed to ensure that they do not create a risk to the health of our employees, customers, contractors or anybody else on the premises. But, if kept in good condition and undisturbed, they should not pose a health hazard.

Policy - Statement of Intent

The aim of this policy is to prevent exposure to asbestos or ACMs and, so far as is reasonably practicable, protect the health, safety and welfare of our employees, customers, contractors and any others who occupy, use, maintain or repair buildings and non-domestic property under our control, and to comply with all relevant legislation, including:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended).

Employer Responsibilities

To ensure that exposure to asbestos or ACMs is controlled, where we have a contractual obligation for the control, maintenance and repair of buildings and non-domestic property, we will:

- take reasonable steps to determine the location of asbestos, ACMs and materials likely to contain asbestos (supposed asbestos);
- presume materials contain asbestos, unless there are good reasons not to do so;
- make and maintain a written record of the location of asbestos and supposed asbestos;
- monitor the condition of asbestos and supposed asbestos;
- assess the risk of exposure from asbestos and supposed asbestos, and document what actions are necessary to manage the risk;
- ensure that the actions necessary to manage the risk are carried out;
- ensure that adequate resources are made available to fulfil the requirements of this policy; and

- review this policy at least annually but more frequently if significant changes occur.

Procedure

To fulfil our responsibilities as outlined above, we will:

- ensure that a detailed survey and risk assessment of buildings and non-domestic property under our control are undertaken by an organisation which can demonstrate technical competence to undertake surveys for ACMs through accreditation by The United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) to ISO/IEC 17020;
- ensure that the Competent Organisation has recorded details, including the location and condition, of all identified asbestos in an Asbestos Register and that an assessment has been recorded for each identified ACM. An up-to-date copy of the register will be held on the site to which it relates;
- develop, and act on, a plan to manage the risks to our employees, customers, contractors or anybody else who may be affected by exposure to any asbestos or ACMs;
- review and monitor the plan and the arrangements so that the plan remains relevant and up-to-date at all times;
- use an appropriately qualified, competent or licensed person, subject to the level of risk posed by the asbestos or ACMs, to make safe any material found to be in a hazardous condition;
- ensure that, where practical, any ACMs have been labelled;
- maintain an up-to-date written record of the location and condition of asbestos or ACMs in the Asbestos Register provided by the Competent Organisation;
- provide information on the location and condition of asbestos or ACMs to all interested parties, including anyone who is liable to work on or disturb them;
- appoint a specialist consultant and licensed asbestos removal contractor to manage the removal of ACMs, where practical, as part of any refurbishment project;
- not use or reuse any ACMs in any building refurbishment or maintenance work; and
- ensure that any work with ACMs is carried out strictly in accordance with current legislation and 'industry good practice'.