



Asbestos

A guide to dealing with
asbestos in your home

COMMUNITIES ♦ HOMES ♦ PEOPLE

Asbestos

The information in this leaflet explains how you can deal with asbestos in and around your home.

Where asbestos might be found

Asbestos is a natural mineral found in rocks all over the world. Due to its heat and water resistance, it was commonly used in the home. The following lists explain the most common products that may contain asbestos:

External

- Rainwater pipes and guttering;
- Roof cladding;
- Roofing felt;
- Roofing sheets (corrugated and flat);
- Roofing slates;
- Roof tiles;
- Soffit boards (underneath the roof overhang between the brickwork and the roof);
- Wall cladding sheets.

Internal

- Bath panels;
- Ceiling tiles;
- Cold water tanks;
- Electric storage heating bricks;
- Fire blankets;
- Fire surrounds;
- Floor tiles;
- Flue pipes;
- Lagging (for pipes and boilers);
- Insulation (for warm air or central heating systems);
- Artex wall and ceiling finishes;
- Wall boards such as internal partitions;
- Airing cupboard linings.

When is asbestos a problem?

Even if there is asbestos in your home, it is usually not a problem. Asbestos only becomes a problem if it is disturbed, damaged or deteriorates with age. If this happens asbestos releases tiny fibres into the air which are easily inhaled.

What are the health risks?

The body's natural defences can break some of these particles down; others stay in the lungs a long time. This can lead to cancer and thickening of the lungs. The most common diseases caused by inhaling asbestos particles are asbestosis and mesothelioma.

Things to remember about asbestos:

- Asbestos does not usually pose a risk unless it is damaged or disturbed;
- It is often best to leave products containing asbestos where they are if they are in good condition and unlikely to be disturbed;
- Try to make sure anything containing asbestos remains in good condition;
- Do not saw, scrub, sand, scrape or drill asbestos products;
- Asbestos is no longer used in construction or in goods such as toasters and hair dryers in this country. However, imported goods may still contain asbestos;
- There is no evidence to suggest that the use of asbestos cement in cold water tanks poses any risk of contaminating the water supply.

Home improvements:

If you are planning home improvements and think you may have asbestos in your home, always talk to us first. We can check our records and tell you if any asbestos is present or arrange for our specialist contractors to carry out an asbestos survey.

DIY rules:

- Do not drill, saw, scrub or sand anything you think may contain asbestos;
- Keep activities to a minimum in any areas where material may contain asbestos;
- Do not dust, sweep, or vacuum debris that may contain asbestos;
- Take every precaution to avoid damaging asbestos material or products containing asbestos;
- Always wear a protective face mask if you are doing any DIY work;
- Soak wallpaper before removing, if possible use a steam stripper and gently peel away the paper before re-decorating;
- Don't try to remove old floor tiles or linoleum. Leave them in place and lay new floor coverings over them.

Disposal

Tenants

As your landlord, it is our responsibility to contain or remove all materials which may contain asbestos from your home. Do not try to remove or disturb items which you think may contain asbestos. Please contact the asbestos helpline on 0800 234 6230 if you suspect you have asbestos in your home.

Leaseholders and shared owners

Leaseholders and shared owners are responsible for all fixtures and fittings within their property.

Items that you believe contain asbestos should be left in place and not disturbed if in good condition. However, if you decide to remove asbestos materials, we would advise that you contact an asbestos removal contractor licensed by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to carry out the removal. If you have any concerns about asbestos in your home, please contact our asbestos management consultants, ALS, on 0800 234 6230.

If you seal or remove asbestos in your property, please let us know so that we can update the records for your property. If you sell your property, you should advise the new owners.

Identifying asbestos

You cannot tell whether a product contains asbestos just by looking at it. Since 1976 British manufacturers have labelled all products containing asbestos. However, these labels are often removed after purchase or concealed when the products are put in position. Products that contain asbestos can look identical to those that don't – if in doubt, call the asbestos information helpline on 0800 234 6230.

Most likely locations of asbestos in a CHP home

The diagram on the next page shows the most likely locations of asbestos in your home. It is unlikely that your home contains asbestos in all of these places.

What to do if you think you have asbestos in your home

Never touch or disturb materials you think could contain asbestos. Licensed specialists must deal with asbestos. If you suspect that materials containing asbestos have been damaged please contact the asbestos helpline on 0800 234 6230.

What we will do about asbestos

Materials containing asbestos will remain in social housing for some time yet. No council or housing association has the money or staff to remove it all. To gather information about asbestos in the homes we manage, we will be working with a specialist consultant to survey all our rented properties. Properties will be inspected from time to time depending on the types of asbestos found and level of risk. We will hold the details of these surveys, and any asbestos materials we find, on an asbestos register.

If the asbestos poses a high risk we will remove it immediately. Our approach meets the requirements of the government and the law. Remember, if the asbestos is in good condition and is unlikely to be disturbed or damaged, it does not pose a risk to your health and we will leave it in place. We may seal materials containing asbestos to stop any fibres escaping. We will inspect the material from time to time to monitor any changes and take action if necessary.

If we need to remove asbestos from your home we will keep you informed about the work and what you need to do to ensure the safety of your family.

Who to contact

If you have any concerns about asbestos in your home, please contact our asbestos management consultants, ALS, on 0800 234 6230.

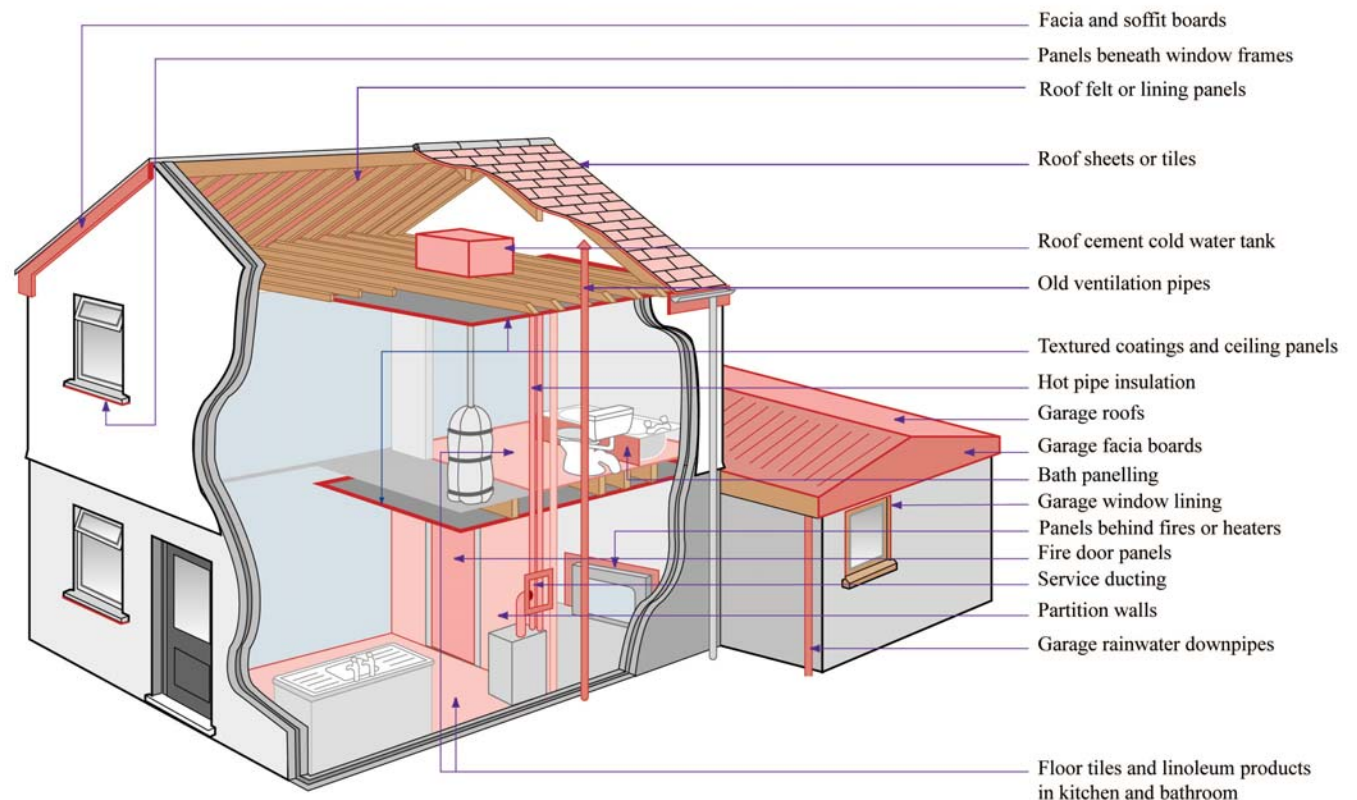
Alternatively you can contact them by email: info@alsltd.com

Useful links:

If you want to find out more about asbestos, we recommend the following websites:

www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos

www.alsltd.com



Please contact us if you would like a copy of this document in large print, British Sign Language DVD, on CD or in another language.

Przewodnik o Azbestozie

Proszę się z nami skontaktować jeśli pragnęliby Państwo kopię tego dokumentu dużym drukiem, na DVD w Brytyjskim Języku Migowym, w innym języku albo na płycie audio (CD). (Polish)

石棉

石棉指引。倘若您需要本檔以大字體、英式手語DVD、另外一種語言或音頻 (CD) 格式提供，請聯絡我們。(Cantonese)

Asbest Kilavuzu

Lütfen bu belgenin büyük baskılı hali, İngilizce DVD veya farklı dillerde ya da ses (CD) ortamı gibi talepleriniz olması durumunda bizimle irtibata geçin. (Turkish)

এসবেস্টস সংক্রান্ত একটি নির্দেশনা

আপনি যদি এই নথিটির একটি কপি বড় প্রিন্টে, ব্রিটিশ সাইন ল্যাঙ্গুয়েজ ডিভিডিভিতে বা অডিও (সিডি) ফরম্যাটে পেতে চান, অনুগ্রহ করে, আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন। (Bengali)

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