

You don't know
what you're getting into.



ASBESTOS

If you are an electrician, plumber, heating and ventilation engineer, joiner, plasterer or work in any similar trade, you are likely to come across this hidden killer in your work – asbestos dust could kill you.

There is **still** a lot of asbestos material in buildings – anywhere built or refurbished before the year 2000 is likely to contain asbestos.

Is there asbestos where you are working?

- › Avoid working with asbestos if possible. If you're unsure whether asbestos is present, don't start work – your boss or the customer should tell you if there is asbestos present.
- › Don't work if the asbestos materials present are sprayed coatings, board or lagging on pipes and boilers – only a licensed contractor should work on these. You can't work with some kinds of asbestos – they are too dangerous.
- › Where asbestos is present, you may only continue to work if you have had asbestos training, the work is properly planned and the right precautions are in place (e.g. you have the right equipment).
- › Once you have been trained, you can work with asbestos cement, textured coatings and certain asbestos materials which do not need a licence.



Work safely with asbestos

Make sure you have had the proper training before you work with asbestos.

Minimise dust:

- › Use hand tools – not power tools
- › Keep materials damp – not wet
- › Clean up as you go – use a special (Class H) vacuum cleaner, not a brush. You can rent Class H vacuum cleaners from tool hire shops
- › Double-bag asbestos waste and label the bags properly

Protect yourself and others:

- › Wear a properly fitted, suitable respirator (e.g. disposable FFP3 type). You can buy these at safety equipment supply shops, ordinary dust masks are not effective
- › Wear suitable disposable overalls ('Type 5') and boots without laces or disposable boot covers
- › When you finish work, decontaminate yourself – wipe down overalls with a damp rag and remove them before removing your mask
- › Put disposable items in asbestos waste bags and dispose of them properly. Don't carry asbestos into your car or home or take overalls home to wash
- › Don't smoke, eat or drink in the work area

Where are you likely to find asbestos?

Some common places you will find asbestos materials are:

- › Ceiling tiles
- › Coating on ceilings, walls and stairwells (textured coatings)
- › Sprayed coating on ducts, pipes and some ceilings
- › Boards around radiators, windows, building columns, pillars
- › Inside fire doors
- › Soffit boards
- › Insulation on pipes
- › Sealants on pipe joints, gaskets
- › Ropes and yarns
- › Fuse boxes
- › Electrical switchgear
- › Water tanks
- › Cement products: roof sheets, down pipes

Want to know more?

Call: **0800 0320 121**

Visit: **www.hseni.gov.uk/hiddenkiller**

For guidance and details of licensed asbestos contractors visit the Asbestos Advisory Service section of the HSENI website **www.hseni.gov.uk**

Contact the UK Asbestos Training Association (**www.ukata.org.uk** Call: **01246 824437**) for information on asbestos awareness and job specific training, usually called 'non-licensed asbestos training'. Other training organisations may also provide asbestos training.