

**hse ni**  
CONTROLLING RISK TOGETHER

Do you know  
**what you're getting into?**

Disturbing Asbestos could be fatal.

Health and Safety Executive  
Northern Ireland



## Stop – Think Asbestos!

- › Do I know if asbestos is present?
- › Is it high risk material that requires a licensed contractor?
- › Have I been trained to work with asbestos?
- › Do I have the correct equipment?

If you do not know the answers to these questions, stop work and check.

Call: **0800 0320 121**

Visit: **[www.hseni.gov.uk/hiddenkiller](http://www.hseni.gov.uk/hiddenkiller)**



## Work safely if asbestos is present.

**Asbestos is a hidden killer.**

It could be hidden in any building built or refurbished before the year 2000... including the one you're working in right now.

Inside this pack you will find information on reducing the risks of asbestos and examples of asbestos applications. Thousands of tradesmen are unknowingly working with asbestos. Are you one of them?





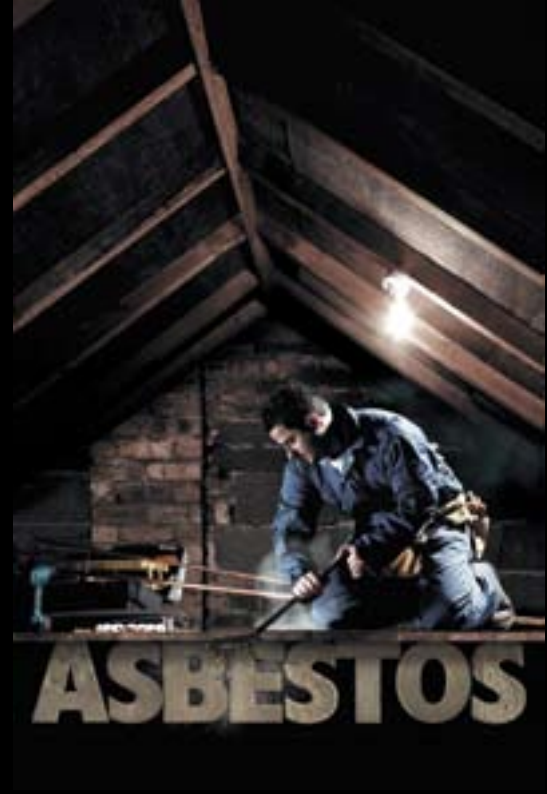
## Is there asbestos where you're working?

- › Avoid working with asbestos if possible. If you're unsure whether asbestos is present, **ask** – 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.

## Where are you likely to find asbestos?

**Some common places you will find asbestos materials are:**

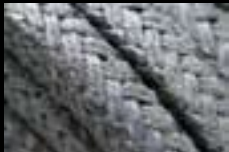
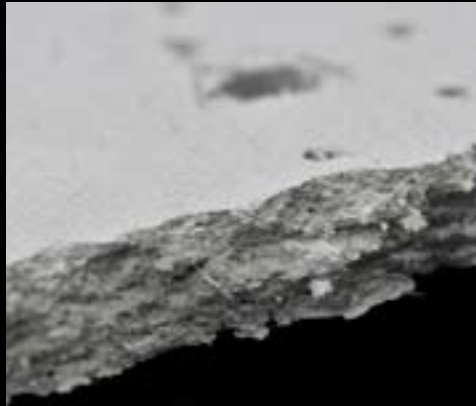
- › Ceiling tiles
- › Coating on ceilings, walls and stairwells (textured coatings)
- › Sprayed coating on ducts, pipes and some ceilings
- › Boards around radiators, windows, fireplaces, building columns, pillars
- › Inside fire doors
- › Soffit boards
- › Insulation on pipes
- › Sealants on pipe joints,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




## Do you know how to spot asbestos?

On the following cards you'll find a range of both common and more unusual asbestos applications. The examples provided highlight where asbestos is typically found.

Unfortunately, asbestos fibres are difficult to identify by eye. The only certain way to identify asbestos is to have a sample tested at a laboratory. It's important the testing is conducted prior to any maintenance or removal of asbestos.





Textured paint  
finish on ceiling

A photograph of a ceiling with a white, popcorn-style textured paint finish. A security camera is mounted on the ceiling, and a fluorescent light fixture is visible in the background. The ceiling is part of a room with yellow walls and a window with a wooden frame.



Asbestos tape  
wrapped on pipe

A close-up photograph of a pipe wrapped in grey, fibrous asbestos tape. The pipe is part of a complex network of pipes and machinery in a utility room. The background shows a white wall with some electrical equipment.



Asbestos  
cement flue

A photograph of a large, white, conical asbestos cement flue. The flue is surrounded by yellow pipe insulation and is connected to a network of pipes. The background shows a white wall with some electrical equipment.



Pipe insulation

A photograph of yellow pipe insulation wrapped around a pipe. The insulation is made of a fibrous material and is part of a network of pipes in a utility room. The background shows a white wall with some electrical equipment.





**Asbestos  
roof slates**



**Damaged asbestos  
sprayed insulation**

**Pipe insulation**

**Asbestos rope used  
to insulate pipe**



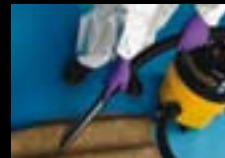


**Asbestos debris  
found in cable tray**

## Work safely 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.

# Asbestos training is a legal requirement

If you work on buildings built or refurbished before the year 2000, asbestos could be present. You will need awareness training so you know how to avoid the risks.

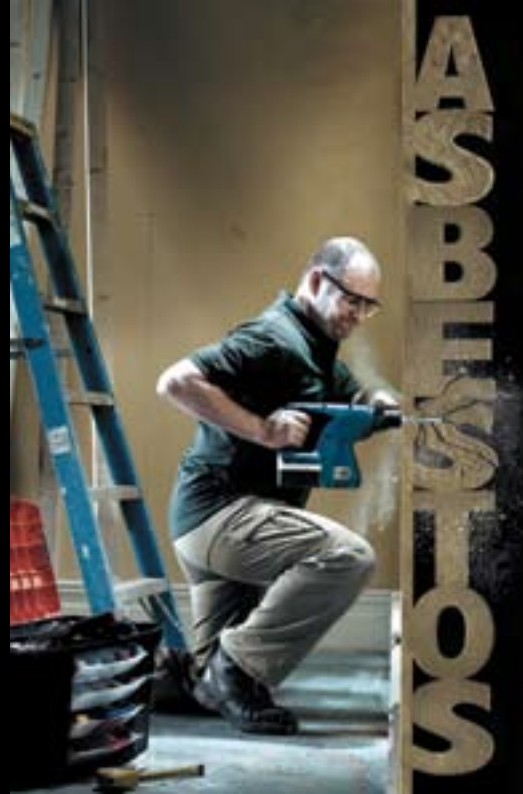
If you plan to disturb asbestos, eg. by drilling a hole in textured coating or removing an asbestos ceiling tile then, as well as awareness training, you will need job-specific, non-licensed asbestos training.

## This will give you the skills to:

- › Use and fit a face-mask
- › Use safe work methods
- › Deal with asbestos waste
- › Safely carry out non-licensed tasks – such as painting undamaged asbestos insulation board, cleaning light fittings attached to asbestos insulating board and cleaning guttering on an asbestos cement roof.

Visit: [www.ukata.org.uk](http://www.ukata.org.uk) or call: **01246 824437**

Other training organisations may also provide asbestos training.



Notes

# Find out more about working with asbestos

Call: **0800 0320 121**

Visit: **[www.hseni.gov.uk/hiddenkiller](http://www.hseni.gov.uk/hiddenkiller)**

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For guidance and details of licensed asbestos contractors  
visit the Asbestos Advisory Service section of the HSENI website  
**[www.hseni.gov.uk](http://www.hseni.gov.uk)**

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