

# Managing Asbestos

## Why does asbestos need to be managed?

Asbestos can be a danger to health if fibres are released into the air (e.g. through damage or during building alterations) and people breathe them in. Anyone whose work involves drilling, sawing or cutting into the fabric of the building may be at risk of breathing in these dangerous fibres. This can lead to asbestos related diseases, such as mesothelioma and other cancers of the chest lining. Damaged asbestos which could potentially contaminate the air may need to be removed (professional advice should be sought) but intact asbestos materials may be left in place.

## Where is asbestos found?

Asbestos containing materials (ACM's) were extensively used in the past and may still be in many existing buildings. It can be found in sprayed asbestos used as fire protection (partitions or panels), insulated lagging for pipes and boilers, insulating boards, ceiling tiles and asbestos cement products (corrugated sheets on roofs or walls).



## Who is responsible?

New requirements from 21 May 2004 will make it the responsibility of the "dutyholder" of any non-domestic premises to ensure asbestos containing materials are identified in the property and are properly managed. The "dutyholder" is the person responsible for maintaining and repairing all or part of the property, or has control of the building. This may be the landlord, tenant or a managing agent for the property. If you occupy a property but are not the dutyholder you still have an obligation to co-operate with whoever manages the asbestos risk.

## What happens next ?

1. I identify where asbestos can be found in the premises, how much of it is present and what condition it is in. The Dutyholder may have enough knowledge to do this but if in doubt advice could be sought from an accredited company.
2. Make a record of the location and condition of the asbestos containing material (ACM).
3. Assess the risk from the material.
4. Prepare a management plan detailing how you are going to manage the risk from the ACM's.
5. Put your management plan into action.
6. Provide information on location and condition of ACM's to anyone who may be affected by them i.e. workers, builders, contractors.
7. Keep your management plan up to date.



If you are unsure if material contains asbestos, **you must presume it does until you can show otherwise**. If samples need to be taken this must be carried out by a competent person from an accredited company. Similarly these companies can also help if you need help with an asbestos survey or if asbestos is to be removed.

Further information can be obtained from the Environmental Services Department Health and Safety Team on 0141 840 3128/9, 3160, 3187 or from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) on 08701 545500.