

A guide to **Asbestos** in your home

What is Asbestos?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring fibrous mineral that was used extensively as a popular building material since the 1950s. It was used as an insulator (to keep heat in and cold out), has good fire protection properties and protects against corrosion.

Asbestos was officially banned in 1999, so if your house was built after 2000 it should be fine.

Where can Asbestos be found?

Asbestos can be found in many products used in buildings (both inside and outside a property).

This list below are some of the common places materials containing asbestos may be found:

1. Roof tiles and roof felt
2. Gutters & rainwater pipes
3. Soffit & fascias
4. Cold water tanks
5. Insulation to pipes
6. Textured coatings to ceiling & walls
7. Toilet cisterns
8. Insulation to floor voids
9. Gaskets & seals to gas appliances
10. Floor tiles
11. Partition walls
12. Panels on or inside fire rated doors
13. Panels behind & inside electrical equipment
14. Panels under windows Insulation in old electric storage heaters

This is not a full list and materials containing asbestos could be found elsewhere in properties.

Some Asbestos Do's and Don'ts

Please do...

- Treat asbestos with respect.
- Contact us if you think you have damaged asbestos in your home.
- Contact us if you are planning any DIY or improvements to your home.
- Help us by keeping any appointments we, or our asbestos surveyors/contractors may give you.
- Take care to avoid damaging asbestos materials.

Please do not...

- Panic – if left undisturbed asbestos is safe.
- Attempt to remove any suspected asbestos materials yourself.
- Put yourself at risk by carrying out DIY on or next to asbestos materials, e.g. cutting, drilling or sanding.
- Dust, sweep or vacuum areas where asbestos debris may lie.

Your questions answered

1. If there is asbestos in my home, why not remove it? Am I not at risk?

When asbestos surveys are carried out, not only do we confirm whether or not materials contain asbestos, we also confirm their condition. Materials containing asbestos in good condition do not pose a risk to your health and sometimes removing it can be more hazardous than leaving it alone. If the material is in a poor condition, then the decision will be made to either remove it or make it safe.

2. I think I may have damaged or disturbed asbestos-containing materials in my home – what should I do?

Do not panic - contact your local Customer Service Centre and we will make arrangements to have the material assessed and sampled if required. We will then decide on the most appropriate action to ensure your safety.

3. I've heard that Artex contains asbestos. What is it and is it safe?

Artex is a textured decorative coating that was widely used on interior walls and ceilings. Some older types of Artex contained a very small amount of asbestos. Artex is safe as long as it is not disturbed i.e. sanded or scraped.

4. Can I paint asbestos-containing materials?

Yes. It is safe to paint Artexed walls and ceilings and even insulation board, however, you should never sand the materials or use tools such as wallpaper scrapers on them. To prepare for painting simply wipe the material with a damp cloth to remove any dirt.

5. I have noticed some pieces of broken floor tile that I have been informed contain asbestos. Am I at risk?

No, even broken pieces of tile are extremely unlikely to release any asbestos fibres. If the tiles do contain asbestos, they need to be disposed of correctly so please contact us so that we can arrange this for you.

For further information on how we deal with asbestos, please refer to our leaflet:

Asbestos – Surveying & Refurbishment Works.

If you think you have damaged asbestos in your home, do not touch or disturb it, contact your local Customer Service Centre on the number shown overleaf.