

Asbestos Policy

1. Introduction

This document brings our asbestos policy regarding asbestos into line with the requirements of the control of asbestos at work regulations which were revised in November 2006

2. Responsibilities

Aspull Electrical Services policy on asbestos intends to ensure so far as it is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees and others who may encounter or be exposed to asbestos.

Aspull Electrical Services policy on asbestos shall ensure that known and identified locations of asbestos are recorded and that any such asbestos information is made available to those persons who require it.

Directors are responsible, so far as is reasonably practicable, for ensuring the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees in their respective departments. In particular they will:

- Prepare and revise as necessary department arrangements for the management and control of work involving asbestos.
- Ensure appropriate training, information and instruction is provided for relevant employees, and personal instruction as appropriate.
- Ensure that employees or relevant contractors are provided with appropriate information, regarding company procedures in areas containing Asbestos.

3. What is Asbestos?

Asbestos is a general name applied to a group of related, naturally occurring fibrous minerals, which have been commonly used in a range of building and equipment materials.

There are three main types of asbestos:

- Chrysotile – white
- Amosite - brown
- Crocidolite - blue

In addition legal provision also covers the following:

- Fibrous actinolite
- Fibrous anthophyllite
- Fibrous tremolite

And any mixture containing any of those minerals.

Asbestos containing products have been widely used in buildings as construction materials, fireproofing, thermal insulation, electrical insulation, sound insulation, decorative plasters, roofing products, flooring products, heat resistant materials, gaskets, friction products etc.

Since 1985 the new use of any material containing blue or brown asbestos has been banned. By 1999 the new use of any building materials containing white asbestos had been banned.

4. Health Effects of Asbestos

All asbestos fibres, blue, brown and white are dangerous although the control limit for exposure to blue and brown fibres is lower than for white. There is no safe form of asbestos although products where the fibres are tightly bonded (e.g. asbestos cement) are less likely to shed fibres than products where the fibres are more loosely bonded (e.g. asbestos insulating board). The main route of entry to the body for asbestos is by inhalation of fibres.

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There is no safe exposure level known for asbestos and once asbestos related diseases occur there is no known cure. There are three main types of serious health risks associated with exposure to asbestos fibres:

Asbestosis – chronic obstructive lung disease

Lung cancer – a fatal lung disease

Mesothelioma – a fatal cancer of the outer lining of the lung specific to asbestos exposure.

Statistics indicate that despite legislative controls, deaths due directly to asbestos are at an all time high of approximately 3000 deaths per year and are predicted to peak at 10000 cases by 2020.

It is recognised that the largest group of workers at risk from asbestos exposure are building workers, particularly those involved in repair and maintenance, refurbishment and demolition, including electricians, plumbers, joiners, and computer and telecommunication engineers – people who may encounter asbestos during their normal day to day work activities.

5. Legislation

This policy is based on the following legislation and shall be amended in line with any changes.

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2006
- The Asbestos Licensing (Amendment) Regulations 1998
- The Asbestos Prohibitions Regulations
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as Amended)
- The Construction Design and Management Regulations 2007.

6. The Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations

These are substantial regulations incorporating an Approved Code of Practice and were last updated in 2002.

They apply to everyone at risk from work with asbestos and extend statutory protection to all those who encounter asbestos at work or are affected by work activities involving it.

Key features of the regulations are:

- Taking reasonable steps to find asbestos containing materials in premises and checking their condition.
- Presuming materials contain asbestos unless there is strong evidence to suppose they do not.
- Keeping an up to date written record of the location and condition of the asbestos containing materials
- Assessing the risk of exposure to asbestos containing materials
- Preparing and implementing a plan to manage the risk.

Other provisions include providing protective equipment, face fitting of respirators, keeping plant and equipment clean, providing information, training and necessary labelling.

7. The Asbestos Licensing Regulations

These regulations prohibit anyone from carrying out work with asbestos insulation, asbestos coating or asbestos insulating board unless they hold a licence granted by the HSE (Health & Safety Executive).

However there are three exceptions to the requirement to hold a licence. These are:

- For works of short duration: The most work that can be done is a total of two hours a week with each worker only exposed for an hour.
- For air monitoring or bulk sample collection to identify asbestos.

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- If you are an employer carrying out work with your own employees on your own premises.

Licensed contractors must ensure that any staff working with asbestos are under medical surveillance, and that they give 14 days notice to HSE of any work that they intend to carry out.

8. The Asbestos Prohibition Regulations

These regulations prohibit the supply and use of all forms of asbestos and asbestos containing products.

9. Policy Application

The arrangements detailed consist of a series of procedures which are intended to safeguard persons who may encounter the possibility of discovering asbestos in the course of their work and to ensure the safety of any premises occupants who may be affected by any associated works which may involve the disturbance of asbestos containing materials.

All reasonable practicable steps will be taken to ensure that Aspull Electrical Services employees, will not be exposed to materials containing asbestos.

10. Training

All staff who may encounter asbestos during the course of their work shall be given the necessary training to be able to identify the situations in which asbestos may be present, to be able to recognise asbestos or similar suspect materials and to set out safe working practice to minimise risks to health and safety.

Induction training will be provided to all new staff

If during the course of normal work practice Asbestos containing material is encountered, the following procedures should be followed.

11. Contractors / Employees

Stop any work, remove and keep all persons out of the area. Where practicable close or seal or lock off the area.
Do not remove any equipment or material.

Prepare and display a potential Asbestos hazard keep out sign to prevent persons from gaining access to the area. Inform the Site Supervisor who will report the discovery to the Main Contractor.

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