

# Asbestos

## What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring fibrous mineral that used to be a popular building material. It was used to keep heat in and cold out, and it offered good protection against fire and corrosion.

Unfortunately, asbestos is also dangerous. Long-term exposure can lead to serious diseases, including lung cancer and asbestosis. It was officially banned in the UK in 1999. So homes built after 2000 should not contain asbestos.

If your home is older than this, please don't worry. The important thing is to manage any asbestos safely, as we explain in this leaflet.

## Where asbestos was used

Asbestos can be found in many building products inside and outside a home.

Common examples are:

- roof tiles and roof felt
- gutters and rainwater pipes
- soffits and fascias
- cold water tanks
- pipe insulation
- textured coatings on ceilings and walls
- toilet cisterns
- gaskets and seals on gas appliances
- floor tiles
- partition walls
- panels on or inside fire doors
- panels behind and inside electrical equipment, and
- insulation in old electrical storage heaters.

## Asbestos do's and don'ts

- **DO** give us access for any asbestos checks.
- **DO** get our advice if you are planning any DIY or home improvements.
- **DO** treat asbestos with respect – avoid damaging materials they may contain asbestos.
- **DO** contact us if you think you have damaged asbestos in your home.
- **DON'T** panic – asbestos is safe if left undisturbed.



- **DON'T** attempt to remove any suspected asbestos.
- **DON'T** put yourself at risk by drilling, sanding or other DIY on or next to asbestos materials.
- **DON'T** dust, sweep or vacuum asbestos debris.

## Your questions answered

### Why don't you remove asbestos in my home?

When we carry out asbestos surveys we check the condition of any asbestos we find. We will remove or make safe any materials in poor condition.

Materials in good condition are not a threat to your health. Sometimes, disturbing asbestos to remove it can be more hazardous than leaving it alone. The decision we take will be based on keeping you safe.

### I might have disturbed asbestos. What do I do?

Don't panic. Contact us we'll arrange for a contractor to come and assess the situation. We will then decide what action to take to keep you safe.

### Is Artex safe?

Artex is a textured, decorative coating that is often found on walls and ceilings. Some older types of Artex had very small amounts of asbestos. Artex is safe if it is not disturbed by sanding, scraping or drilling.

### Can I paint materials containing asbestos?

Yes, but don't sand them or use a wallpaper scraper. Prepare to paint by wiping dirt off with a damp cloth.

### Our asbestos-containing floor tiles have broken. Am I at risk?

No. But the pieces will need disposing of correctly. Call us to arrange this.