Painting undamaged asbestos insulating board (AIB)

What this sheet covers

This sheet describes good practice when you need to paint undamaged AIB for protection or for decoration.

This sheet is NOT appropriate where the asbestos material is badly damaged. Use an HSE-licensed contractor for such work.

Preparing the work area

- Ensure safe access.
- Restrict access - minimise the number of people present.
- Close doors. Use tape and notices to warn others.
- Ensure adequate lighting.

Equipment

- 500-gauge polythene sheeting and duct tape;
- warning tape and notices;
- Class H vacuum cleaner (BS EN 60335) if dust needs to be removed from AIB - see sheet em4;
- low-solvent paint;
- low-pressure sprayer, brush or roller;
- bucket of water and rags;
- asbestos waste container, eg labelled polythene sack; and
- clear polythene sack.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

- Provide:
  - disposable overalls fitted with a hood; and
  - boots without laces (laced boots are hard to decontaminate).
- A respirator is not normally required.

Procedure

Caution: Never prepare surfaces by sanding or rubbing down.

- Check that there is no damage before starting work; if there is, see sheet a6.
- Protect nearby surfaces from contamination. Cover with 500-gauge polythene sheeting and fix with duct tape to non-asbestos surfaces.
- Remove dust using the Class H vacuum cleaner.
- Apply the paint, preferably by low-pressure spraying. Spray using a sweeping motion.
- If painting by brush or roller, do so gently and avoid concentrating on one area, to reduce surface damage.
Cleaning and disposal

- Clean the equipment and the area with damp rags.
- Put debris, used rags, polythene sheeting, paintbrush/roller and other waste in the asbestos waste container and tape it closed.
- Put the asbestos waste container in a clear polythene sack and tape it closed.
- Disposal - see sheet em9.

Personal decontamination

- See sheet em8

Clearance and checking off

- Visually inspect the area to make sure that it has been cleaned properly.
- Clearance air sampling is not normally required.
- Get the premises owner, duty-holder or client to check off the job.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Download and follow these advice sheets from www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/essentials/index.htm:

- em1 What to do if you uncover or damage materials that could contain asbestos
- em2 Training
- em4 Using a Class H vacuum cleaner for asbestos
- em7 Using damp rags to clean surfaces of minor asbestos contamination
- em8 Personal decontamination
- em9 Disposal of asbestos waste

OTHER HAZARDS

Work at height - see www.hse.gov.uk/falls/index.htm. Take precautions to avoid falls. Must you work from a ladder? Where necessary, erect an access platform. There may also be other hazards - you need to consider them all.

SAFETY CHECKLIST

- Can you avoid disturbing asbestos by doing the job in some other way?
- Do you need a licence for the work?
- Always follow all legal requirements.
- Follow the task guidance sheet.
- Use an asbestos waste container.
- Dispose at a licensed disposal site.

Caution:

- Don’t sweep up dust or debris - use a Class H vacuum cleaner or damp rags.
- Don’t take used overalls home.
- Don’t re-use disposable PPE.
- Don’t smoke.
- Don’t eat or drink in the work area.

This guidance is issued by the Health and Safety Executive. Following the guidance is not compulsory and you are free to take other action. But if you do follow the guidance you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. Health and safety inspectors seek to secure compliance with the law and may refer to this guidance as illustrating good practice.

This document is available at www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/essentials/index.htm

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Published by the Health and Safety Executive 12/07

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