



HEALTH AND SAFETY  
AUTHORITY



# Don't Risk It! Stop & Think **Asbestos**

**Do you carry out repair, renovation or  
maintenance works in older buildings?**

If so, read the information in this leaflet....

It could save your life!

**ASBESTOS**

# STOP AND THINK ASBESTOS

Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs) can be hidden in any building built or refurbished before the year 2000

## What is Asbestos?

Asbestos is a term used for the fibrous forms of several naturally occurring minerals. There are six regulated types of asbestos in Ireland but Crocidolite (blue), Amosite (brown) and Chrysotile (white) were the main types of asbestos used.

## What are the Health Effects?

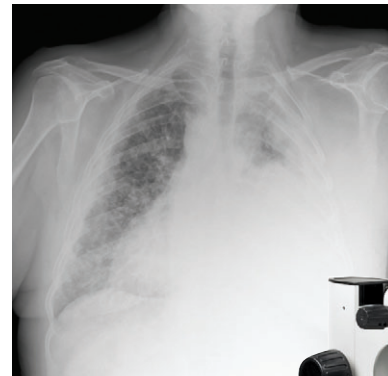
Asbestos is a Category 1 carcinogen and all six types can cause cancer. There is no cure for asbestos related diseases. Inhalation of asbestos fibre may lead to:

- ▼ Asbestosis: scarring of the lung tissue, which restricts breathing.
- ▼ Lung cancer: Smoking greatly increases the risk of developing asbestos related lung cancer.
- ▼ Mesothelioma: a cancer of the cells that make up the lining around the outside of the lungs, ribs (pleura) or abdominal organs (peritoneum).

The diseases can take many years (15-60) to develop, and there are no immediate changes in someone's health after breathing in asbestos.

## Asbestos in Buildings

Asbestos have been widely used in construction materials for a number of purposes. The 'Asbestos Building' diagram on the right describes the common types and locations of asbestos containing materials in buildings. Note: This diagram does not show all possible uses and locations of asbestos-containing materials. A detailed survey will be required to identify all asbestos-containing materials present in a building.







Source: HSE(UK)

**ROOF AND EXTERIOR WALLS**

- 1 Roof sheets, slates and tiles
- 2 Guttering and drainpipes
- 3 Wall cladding
- 4 Soffit boards
- 5 Panel beneath window
- 6 Roofing felt and coating to metal wall cladding

**BOILER, VESSELS AND PIPEWORK**

- 7 Lagging on boiler pipework, calorifier, etc.
- 8 Damaged lagging and associated debris
- 9 Paper lining under non-asbestos pipe lagging
- 10 Gasket in pipe and vessel joints
- 11 Rope seal on boiler access hatch and between cast iron boiler sections
- 12 Paper lining inside steel boiler casing
- 13 Boiler flue

**CEILING**

- 14 Spray coating to ceiling, walls beams/columns
- 15 Tiles, slats, canopies and fire breaks above ceiling
- 16 Loose asbestos in ceiling/floor cavity
- 17 Textured coatings and paints

**INTERIOR WALLS / PANELS**

- 18 Partition walls
- 19 Loose asbestos inside partition walls
- 20 Panel beneath window
- 21 Panel lining to lift shaft
- 22 Panelling to vertical and horizontal beams
- 23 Panel behind electrical equipment
- 24 Panel on access hatch to service riser
- 25 Panel lining service riser and floor
- 26 Heater cupboard around domestic boiler
- 27 Panel behind/under heater

- 28 Panel on, or inside, fire door

- 29 Bath panel

**FLOORING MATERIALS**

- 30 Floor tiles, linoleum and paper backing, lining to suspended floor

**AIR HANDLING SYSTEMS**

- 31 Lagging
- 32 Gaskets
- 33 Anti-vibration gaiter

**DOMESTIC APPLIANCES**

- 34 Gaskets rope seals and panels in domestic boilers
- 35 'Caposil' insulating blocks, panels, paper, string etc in domestic heater
- 36 String seals on radiators

**OTHER**

- 37 Fire blanket
- 38 Water tank
- 39 Brake/clutch lining

# STOP AND THINK ASBESTOS

## Protecting Your Health and Those Around You

- ▼ Complete **asbestos awareness** training
- ▼ **ACMs must be identified prior** to commencing maintenance, demolition or refurbishment works in buildings built before 2000. Ask “**Has this workplace been checked for ACMs?**”
- ▼ Risks from identified ACMs **must be assessed** with regard to any work you do that may affect them and decisions on what precautions to take.
- ▼ **Don't risk it!** If information is not available, **then presume materials** may contain asbestos unless proven otherwise and **seek competent advice.**
- ▼ **Do not disturb or remove** identified ACMs if they must remain in place and plan work to avoid disturbance if you are working close to known ACMs.
- ▼ If you uncover any hidden material or dust you suspect may contain asbestos, **stop work and get competent advice.**
- ▼ **Do not remove lower risk ACMs** e.g. asbestos cement flue, toilet cistern etc, unless you are fully trained to do so, have appropriate personal protective equipment and correct means for disposing of the ACMs.
- ▼ Any work with asbestos pipe/vessel insulation, spray coating or insulating board IS NOT deemed lower risk work. Work with these materials must be carried out by competent specialist asbestos contractors.

**Be Alert at all times to older building materials and equipment that may contain asbestos. Avoid exposure to all dust.**

**Encourage those around you to do the same!**

**Spread the word – Not asbestos!**



## Further Information

The Health and Safety Authority's **Guidelines on Management and Abatement of Asbestos Containing Materials** provides comprehensive practical guidance on dealing with ACMs, in particular, they contain advice for maintenance workers who intend to carry out permitted short duration work on ACMs.

These **Guidelines** also provide detailed information on typical ACMs found in Irish workplaces with photographic examples.

For further information or advice, contact the Health and Safety Authority's Workplace Contact Unit on

**LoCall: 1890 289 389**

**Email: [wcu@hsa.ie](mailto:wcu@hsa.ie)**

Or visit our asbestos web pages at

**[www.hsa.ie/asbestos](http://www.hsa.ie/asbestos)**

A PDF version of this asbestos awareness information sheet can be downloaded from the HSA website.