HSA

An tÚdarás Sláinte agus Sábháilteachta
Health and Safety Authority

2025 Code of Practice

for the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Exposure to Asbestos) Regulations, 2006-2025

Contents

Foreword

The Health and Safety Authority, with the consent of Alan Dillon, Minister of State at the Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment, publishes this Code of Practice entitled "2025 Code of Practice for the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Exposure to Asbestos) Regulations, 2006- 2025 in accordance with section 60 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 (No. 10 of 2005).

This Code of Practice provides practical guidance as to the observance of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Exposure to Asbestos) Regulations, 2006-2025 (S.I. No. 386/2006, S.I. No. 589/2010 and S.I. No. 632/2025) hereinafter the Asbestos Regulations, in relation to occupational exposure limit value (OELVs) and air monitoring, having regard to the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

This Code of Practice comes into operation on 21st December 2025 and from that date it replaces the asbestos entries in the "2024 Code of Practice for the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Chemical Agents) Regulations (2001-2021) & the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Carcinogens, Mutagens and Reprotoxic Substances) Regulations (2024)" which was issued in accordance with Section 60 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

Notice of the publication of this Code of Practice was published in the Iris Oifigiúil on 23 December 2025.

As regards the use of Codes of Practice in criminal proceedings, section 61 of the 2005 Act provides as follows -

"61.—(1) Where in proceedings for an offence under this Act relating to an alleged contravention of any requirement or prohibition imposed by or under a relevant statutory provision being a provision for which a code of practice had been published or approved by the Authority under section 60 at the time of the alleged contravention, subsection (2) shall have effect with respect to that code of practice in relation to those proceedings.

(2) (a) Where a code of practice referred to in subsection (1) appears to the court to give practical guidance as to the observance of the requirement or prohibition alleged to have been contravened, the code of practice shall be admissible in evidence.

(b) Where it is proved that any act or omission of the defendant alleged to constitute the contravention—

(i) is a failure to observe a code of practice referred to in subsection (1), or

(ii) is a compliance with that code of practice,

then such failure or compliance is admissible in evidence.

(3) A document bearing the seal of the Authority and purporting to be a code of practice or part of a code of practice published or approved of by the Authority under this section shall be admissible as evidence in any proceedings under this Act."

Periodic revision of the Code of Practice

A revision of the Code of Practice to reflect current knowledge will be undertaken by the Health and Safety Authority periodically.

Comments concerning on the Code of Practice may be made in writing to the Health and Safety Authority, Programme Manager, Occupational Health Division, Metropolitan Building, James Joyce Street, Dublin 1, Lo call: **0818 289 389** or e-mail **contactus@hsa.ie**

Dr. Marie Dalton
Secretary to the Board

1) Introduction

Occupational exposure limit values (**OELVs**) provide a basis for ensuring that exposure to airborne contaminants in the workplace is controlled in such a way as to prevent and reduce adverse health effects.

An OELV for a given chemical represents the maximum exposure to the chemical in workplace air, which is considered consistent with this objective. For asbestos, exposure levels should be maintained well below the OELV and should be as low as technically possible.

The exposure limit value is based on an 8 hour reference period, a time-weighted average (**TWA**) concentration of airborne substances.

Schedule 1 to this Code of Practice stipulates the exposure limit values for asbestos.

This Code of Practice, in conjunction with the Asbestos Regulations, transposes provisions from the following Commission Directives:

- Directive 2009/148/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to asbestos at work[1];
- Regulation (EU) 2019/1243 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 adapting a number of legal acts providing for the use of the regulatory procedure with scrutiny to Articles 290 and 291 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (Text with EEA relevance)[2];
- Directive (EU) 2023/2668 Of The European Parliament And Of The Council Of 22 November 2023 on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to asbestos at work[3];

[1] OJ No.L 330, 16.12.2009, p. 28–36

[2] OJ No L 198, 25.7.2019, p241-344

[3] OJ No L, 2023/2668, 30.11.2023

2) Definitions/Glossary

Chemical Abstracts Service (CAS) Number - This is a unique numerical identifier assigned by the American Chemical Abstracts Service to every chemical substance described in the open scientific literature, including organic and inorganic compounds, minerals, isotopes, alloys and non-structurable materials. Individual CAS numbers and associated nomenclature can be checked on the ECHA Website – **https://chem.echa.europa.eu/**

CLP - Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures.[4]

EC No. - The European Community number, or EC number, also known as EINECS No., and EC#, is a unique seven-digit identifier that is assigned to chemical substances for regulatory purposes within the European Union by the regulatory authorities. Online searches can be carried out using the European Chemical Agency's Website – See **https://chem.echa.europa.eu/**

Exposure Risk Relationship (ERR) - For non-threshold carcinogens, no health based OEL can be identified. An exposure-risk relationship (ERR) expresses the excess (life-time) cancer risk (cases per 100,000 exposed) as a function of the concentration in the air. Each substance has a different ERR. It can be used as a basis for setting limit values for non-threshold substances.

f/cm³ - fibres per cubic centimetre of air

f/ml - fibres per millilitre of air

Occupational Exposure Limit Value (OELV) is the term used in this Code of Practice to describe an exposure standard for a chemical in workplace air. It is the limit of the time-weighted average of the concentration of a chemical agent in the air within the breathing zone of a worker in relation to a specified reference period, as approved by the Health and Safety Authority. The concentration of the chemical agent in the air is expressed as f/ml or f/cm^3 as appropriate.

Occupational Hygiene - is the science of identification, evaluation and control of exposure to workplace health hazards including chemicals, dust, fumes and fibres.

REACH - European Regulation (EC) 1907/2006 on the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals.[5]

[4] OJ No. L 353, 31.12.2008, p. 1

[5] OJ No. L 396, 30.12.2006, p. 1

3) OELV Compliance

The term '8-hour reference period' relates to the procedure whereby the occupational exposures in any 24-hour period are treated as equivalent to a single uniform exposure for 8 hours (the 8-hour time-weighted average (TWA) exposure).

The Time-Weighted Average is defined as the time-weighted average concentration for a conventional 8-hour day / 40-hour week.

The 8-hour TWA may be represented mathematically by:

$C_1 T_1 + C_2 T_2 + \ldots C_n T_n / 8$

where $C_1 \ldots C_n$ are the occupational exposures and $T_1 \ldots T_n$ are the associated exposure time in hours in any 24-hour period.

To assess the exposure of workers to chemicals and to state with certainty that it does not exceed the occupational exposure limit values (OELVs) would require measurement of the exposure of every worker for every working day during every operational phase. This approach is not feasible or practical.

The measurement of asbestos in the air at the place of work shall be carried out at regular intervals during specific operational phases. Depending on the results of the initial risk assessment, not all operational phases need to be included in each sampling period. There must be enough samples of adequate volume to guarantee a representative result and reflect the personal exposure of the worker. Statistical tools can be used to help determine compliance. A detailed description of the methods is beyond the scope of this code of practice. Regardless of the method used, a conclusion of compliance cannot be based on one sample or a short duration sample.

Operational phases include but are not limited to

- Site set up
- Precleaning
- Enclosure construction
- Preparation for removal
- Removal of ACM
- Waste handling
- Fine cleaning
- Clearance testing
- Enclosure removal

The results of monitoring and expected exposure levels influence the choice of respiratory protective equipment (RPE). RPE with a suitable Assigned Protection Factor (APF) must be provided and worn correctly. Fit testing is required for all tight-fitting respirators.

The exposure data must be entered into the Occupational Health Register as per Regulation 25 and Schedule 6 of the Asbestos Regulations.

SCHEDULE 1 - List of EU derived Occupational Exposure Limit Values

For the purposes of this Directive, 'asbestos' means the following fibrous silicates, which are classified as carcinogens 1A pursuant to Annex VI, Part 3, to Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council[6]:

(a) asbestos, actinolite, CAS No 77536-66-4;

(b) asbestos, amosite (grunerite), CAS No 12172-73-5;

(c) asbestos, anthophyllite, CAS No 77536-67-5;

(d) asbestos, chrysotile, CAS No 12001-29-5;

(e) asbestos, crocidolite, CAS No 12001-28-4;

(f) asbestos, tremolite, CAS No 77536-68-6.

Substance	Occupational Exposure Limit Value (8 hour reference period) Fibres/cm^3	Notes
Asbestos	0.01	Only fibres with a length of more than 5 micrometres, a breadth of less than 3 micrometres and a length/breadth ratio greater than 3:1 shall be taken into consideration. This applies until 20 December 2029
Asbestos	0.01	Applies from 21 December 2029 Fibres with a breadth of less than 0.2 micrometres shall also be taken into consideration
Asbestos	0.002	Applies from 21 December 2029

In relation to the 0.01fibres/cm^3 limit, the Limit of Quantification (LOQ) of the method used must be at least at least 0.010 fibres/cm^3.

The LOQ is the lowest concentration that can be quantitatively detected with a stated accuracy and precision. It differs from Limit of Detection (LOD) which is usually a lower value but cannot be used to accurately determine exposure levels.

The WHO method of 1997 "Determination of airborne fibre concentrations: A recommended method by phase contrast microscopy (Membrane filter method), World Health Organisation, Geneva, 1997" can meet the LOQ criteria when applied by a competent person and a laboratory equipped for fibre counting.

[6] OJ No. L 353, 31.12.2008, p. 1

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