

## **ASBESTOS AWARENESS REFRESHER GUIDELINES FOR TOOL BOX TALK**

### **ASBESTOS AWARENESS**

- 1. Refresher training Paragraph 147, ACOP L143** *“Refresher training should be given at least every year and should be appropriate to the role undertaken. Those persons who require only awareness training could have refresher training as part of other health and safety updates. Employers should identify the specific training needs of their employees so that the refresher training can be appropriately tailored. It should not be a repeat of the initial training”* It is required to be given to employees whose work could foreseeably expose them to Asbestos. In particular it should be given to all demolition workers and those workers in the refurbishment, maintenance and allied trades where their work may disturb the fabric of the building because ACM’s may become exposed during their work.

In accordance with Reg 10 Paragraph 127 (a,b,c & d) of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006, the following topics will be covered

- Types of Asbestos
  - Properties of Asbestos
  - Effects of Health
  - Presence of Asbestos in Buildings
  - The Risks
  - Avoiding Risks from Asbestos
  - Emergency Procedures
  - Test
- 2. Operations resulting in exposure to Asbestos:** The control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 indicate that almost all workers within the Construction Industry that will come across ACM’s, these include (although not limited to):
    - General Maintenance Staff
    - Electricians
    - Plumbers
    - Gas Fitters
    - Painters & Decorators
    - Joiners
    - Plasterers
    - Demolition Workers
    - Roofers
    - Shop Fitters

**3. Types of Asbestos:** There are 3 main types of Asbestos:

- CHRYSOTILE (WHITE) SERPENTINE GROUP
- CROCIDOLITE (BLUE) AMPHIBOLE GROUP
- GRUNERITE (AMOSITE -BROWN) AMPHIBOLE GROUP

There are a further 3 which were very rarely used within the UK

- ANTHOPHYLLITE
- ACTINOLITE
- TREMOLITE

**4. Properties of Asbestos:**

- Good thermal insulator
- Stable at high temperatures
- Good electrical insulator
- High tensile strength similar to steel
- Good sound insulator
- Long flexible fibers
- Does not degrade over time
- Incombustibility
- Reinforcing and binding agent

**5. What Types of Asbestos are Dangerous**

- All types of asbestos are classified as Category 1 Carcinogens
- Amphiboles are extremely dangerous substances
- Serpentine is only slightly less dangerous than amphiboles

**6. Effects on Health:**

- Asbestos passes into the body by: - Breathing it in or Ingestion.
- When this happens there is a risk of the following diseases:
  - a) Asbestosis
  - b) Lung Cancer,
  - c) Mesothelioma

**7. Health Effects:**

- In most cases it can take anywhere from 10 years plus from the time of initial exposure to the development and the symptoms of cancer.
- This latency period means that many workers may become ill years after they leave a job or have been exposed.
- Many do not remember when or where they were exposed to asbestos.
- Difficult to take court action as many have more than one employers.

### (Summary)

- If you work with Asbestos on a regular basis your risk of an asbestos related disease is 1:8, however if you smoke your chances increase to 1:2
- If you are exposed to Asbestos and you smoke your risk of lung cancer is increased to more than 50 times the rate expected in non-smokers with no asbestos exposure
- Asbestos related diseases can appear from 10 years plus
- Asbestos related diseases are virtually inoperable
- Asbestos related diseases cause 1% of all male deaths in the EU (This is rising)
- Single very large exposure can potentially kill

### 8. Asbestos in Buildings:

- Asbestos has been used within over 4,000 products, the vast majority of which we are building materials-these include: - roof sheets, guttering, doors, ceilings, wall linings, vinyl tiles, textured coatings (artex), fuse boxes, boilers and pipe work.
- The above list is limited and new products are found each year which contain asbestos.

### 9. The Risks

(High Risk of Fibre Release)

- Limpet sprayed coatings
- Thermal insulation-lagging to pipes, boilers and calorifiers
- Insulation Boards

(Medium Risk of Fibre Release)

- Cements (including roof sheets and flues)
- Fire blankets and curtains
- Paper production

(Low risk of fibre Release)

- Thermoplastic floor tiles
- Bitumen roofing felts
- Textured coatings (artex) & paints
- Mastics, sealants, putties & adhesives

### 10. Personal Protective Equipment:

- Face Mask (COSHH – Regulation 7 Para 150 – ***“Employers should ensure that the selected facepiece is of the right size and can correctly fit each wearer. For a tight-fitting facepiece (filtering facepieces usually known as disposable mask, half & full face masks) the initial selection should include fit testing to ensure the wearer has***

***the correct device. The test will assess the fit by determining the degree of face seal leakage of a test agent while RPE user is wearing the facepiece under test”)***

- Coveralls\_ They must be Type 5 Category 3
- They must be elasticated at the cuffs and ankles and hood to prevent the ingress of fibres
- Work boots must not have laces as fibres can get trapped in the holes and laces of the boots
- Overalls must be worn over the boots and straps of the mask must be under the hood of the overalls.

**11. What The Law Says:** To ensure so far as is reasonably practicable Health ,Safety and Welfare at work. In particular (with regards to asbestos) to ensure all employees who may disturb asbestos are trained appropriately (at least Asbestos Awareness) All are inducted on the contents of Asbestos Register for all works they undertake. Have in place a way for employees to report any possible Asbestos findings

**12. Health and Safety at Work Act:** It is essential to follow and understand all H&S regulations otherwise there will be a threat of prosecution:

**13. Avoiding Risks from Asbestos**

If you suspect Asbestos to be present, the following steps should be taken:

- Stop work immediately
- Inform those around you
- Everyone should leave the area where asbestos is suspected
- Contact your line manager and await their further instructions

**14. Emergency Procedures:**

(In the event you are exposed/contaminated inadvertently to Asbestos: -

1. Leave the area and go outside by the shortest route, where there is nobody else around
2. Report the incident to your manager and the person in control of the building
3. Your manager should arrange for decontaminating you, which may require the use of a DCU and your clothes removed for disposal in the correct manner

**15. Legislation & Guidelines:**

- CAR-Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 including Regulation 4 (The Duty to Manage)
- ACM-Asbestos Containing Materials
- ACOP – Approved Code of Practice L143
- CDM Regulations 2007
- HASWA -Health and Safety at Work Act 1974



- COSHH – Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
- MASWA -Management of Health & Safety at Work Act 1999
- The Hazardous Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2005
- Special Waste Scotland Regulations 2004

## **UKATA (United Kingdom Asbestos Training Association) Recommendation:**

### **EMPLOYEES UNDERTAKE A FULL ASBESTOS AWARENESS COURSE EVERY 2 YEARS**

**Recommended: The number of delegates on a UKATA Asbestos Awareness Refresher course should be no more than 15.**

**Mandatory: No more than 25**

Competence of those providing training (Paragraph 139 Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006):

*“All training should be provided by someone who is competent to do so, who has had adequate personal practical experience and who has a theoretical knowledge of all relevant aspects of the work being carried out by the employer”*