

Many tradesmen and DIY enthusiasts are failing to appreciate that asbestos was widely used in new and refurbished buildings until 2000 having been banned from import and manufacture in 1999.

The presence of asbestos containing materials (ACM's) may not be obvious, however when ACM's are damaged, dangerous fibres are released exposing both the contractors and occupants of the building to the risk of developing serious disease.

PLEASE NOTE: Owners of Domestic properties have no legal duties under H&S law or the ACoP, until the properties becomes a workplace, at which point the contractor has duties that will require an asbestos survey if the works are liable to disturb the fabric of the property.



www.gosha.org.gg

ASBESTOS

Are you aware
of your legal
obligations?

The Law on Asbestos has Changed

The Health and Safety at Work (General) (Guernsey) Ordinance 1987, requires contractors to work safely and ensure they do not put their own employees, the occupants of the buildings and the public at risk.

In 2010, the Approved Code of Practice entitled "The Management of Exposure to Asbestos in Workplace Buildings, and Structures" was issued by the HSE. A revised Approved Code of Practice entitled "Control of Asbestos" came into effect in 2013.

This requires that exposure to asbestos fibres is prevented or kept as low as reasonably practicable, through various means. It is now a requirement that commercial buildings built or refurbished before 1999, are provided with an asbestos management plan. This means that generally speaking that buildings built prior to this, will have to be suitably surveyed by a competent surveyor and where ACM's are found a plan must be produced to describe the action necessary to prevent ACM's from being disturbed or asbestos fibres being released.



If You Are a Contractor Undertaking Work You Must:

- Have Asbestos Awareness training.
- In a commercial property ask to see the Asbestos Management Plan, so that you can be confident that you are complying with the law and not likely to disturb ACM's. It is your duty to make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risk from asbestos in relation to the type of work you are doing. The asbestos management plan might be sufficient. If there is no register or you are disturbing the fabric of the building then an invasive survey may be required. In a domestic household it is your responsibility as a contractor to suitably check for asbestos before any works start.
- If you work with unlicensed asbestos containing materials such as asbestos cement, you must work to a recorded method statement, wear the appropriate PPE that includes disposable overalls and a P3 mask (correctly worn) and suitably dispose of any asbestos waste in suitable heavy duty, secured/sealed and suitably labelled double bags. You should also be suitably insured so check with your insurance company first. You should also have received non-licensed task specific training.
- Even with the best planning and checking before you start work you may come across something that might be asbestos. STOP WORK and get it checked by a competent person or call the HSE for further advice. Do not continue to disturb a suspected material because if it is asbestos you will make the situation worse.



Are You Asbestos Aware?

This list is not exhaustive but asbestos containing materials have been used widely in construction materials for a number of purposes including fireproofing, thermal insulation, electrical insulation, sound insulation, decorative plasters, roofing products, flooring products, heat resistant materials and gaskets. Details of companies providing asbestos awareness training can be found on the GOSHA website: www.gosha.org.gg.

For more information on working with asbestos contact the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) at Commerce and Employment on 01481 234567 or visit their website on www.hse.gov.uk.

A selection of essential guidance on working with non-licensed asbestos products can be found on a UK government website HSE www.hse.gov.uk.

