

Asbestos





Asbestos

Asbestos was widely used until the 1980's to improve the performance of materials and to provide heat resistance and insulation.

This leaflet looks at concerns and questions about asbestos in homes.

What is asbestos?

It is a natural substance which occurs in rock throughout the world. It formed around the same time as coal, oil and natural gas.

Because asbestos formed in rock throughout the world, there are low levels of fibres in the air everywhere.

Why was asbestos used?

Asbestos fibres are strong and are resistant to heat and chemicals. These properties led to asbestos being used in a range of building materials to increase strength, durability, and to provide insulation and fire protection.

Should I worry about asbestos?

Asbestos poses little risk to health unless it is damaged or disturbed, and dust and fibres are released into the air and breathed in. The more frequent the exposure, the greater the risk to health, this is why building workers are considered to be the highest group at risk now.

If your home is less than 25 years old, it is unlikely to contain asbestos. Homes built or refurbished between 1930 and 1980 are likely to contain materials made from asbestos and if your home is over 75 years old, it may contain asbestos.

Asbestos was also used in some household products (such as oven gloves and ironing board rest pads) but its use decreased greatly from the mid 1980's and has been banned in most products since 1993.

Where might it be found?

Common locations of asbestos are:

- ⊙ Asbestos cement garage and shed wall panels or roof sheets
- ⊙ Asbestos cement drainpipes, gutters and downpipes
- ⊙ Asbestos cement or insulation board soffits, infill panels and partition wall boards
- ⊙ Asbestos cement bath panels
- ⊙ Asbestos cement boiler flue pipes and chimney pots (cows)
- ⊙ Asbestos insulation boards used as fire protection within boiler Cupboards
- ⊙ Service ducts access boards and pipework boxing (ducts)
- ⊙ Decorative textured coatings (Artex) and paints applied to walls and ceilings

- ⊙ Floor tiles and cushion flooring
- ⊙ Panels on or within fire doors

These materials are not dangerous as long as they are in good condition. We have taken steps to make sure that tenants, members of the public, council employees and our contractors are protected from exposure to asbestos dust.

We may take action if asbestos is found in your home, depending on the type, location and condition of the asbestos. Before we take action we will inspect the property. We may take samples to find out whether asbestos is present and the amount.

If asbestos material is found, but there is no damage we may leave it alone and monitor it. In some cases, we may take action to secure or seal the asbestos to prevent dust or fibres from escaping into the atmosphere. Or, we may decide that we need to remove the asbestos – we will tell you how this will take place.

How can I improve my home safely?

If you have asbestos materials in your home, extra care should be taken when doing any DIY.

DO NOT attempt any work involving sprayed asbestos, asbestos lagging or asbestos insulating boards. A licenced

contractor **MUST** undertake work involving these materials.

If you do any DIY work involving asbestos materials, take the following precautions:

- ⊙ **DO** - Keep other people away from the area of work.
- ⊙ **DO** - Protect the area around where you are working with disposable plastic sheets.
- ⊙ **DO** - Wear protective clothing such as overalls (preferably disposable ones), with a hood; wear disposable gloves.
- ⊙ **DO** - Keep asbestos materials damp to avoid producing dust – use a plant sprayer to spray water on to the surfaces to be worked on. Try to avoid soaking the area as this will make cleaning up more difficult, and avoid getting water in to contact with electricity.
- ⊙ **DO** - Try to work outside and avoid working overhead.
- ⊙ **DO** - Use hand tools rather than power tools to keep the dust produced to a minimum.
- ⊙ **DO NOT** - Breathe in asbestos dust – wear a disposable mask (marked 'CE' to EN 149 with FFP2 particulate filters is recommended).
- ⊙ **DO NOT** - Drill, cut or disturb asbestos unless absolutely necessary, consider covering existing decorations rather than

attempting to remove them. Some types of asbestos materials are very soft and can release large numbers of fibres if sanded or scraped.

- ⊙ **DO NOT** - Use a domestic vacuum cleaner to clear dust. Hire an industrial vacuum cleaner that conforms to BS 5415 (Type H).
- ⊙ **DO** - When you have finished work, clean up and then remove the overalls carefully to avoid raising any dust that may have collected in the fabric. If the overalls are disposable, double bag them and clearly mark the bag with "ASBESTOS WASTE". Wash non-disposable overalls immediately, separately from other items of laundry, in a washing machine.
- ⊙ **DO** - Wash your hands and face thoroughly.

How can I safely dispose of asbestos materials?

- ⊙ Wet small amounts of asbestos waste and double seal it in strong plastic bags. These should be sealed tightly and clearly marked "ASBESTOS WASTE".
- ⊙ **DO NOT** - Break up asbestos cement sheets. These do not need to be sealed in bags, but should be wrapped in polythene or similar sheeting. Seal the edges of the polythene with tape.

- ⊙ **DO NOT** - Put asbestos waste in the wheelie bins as general waste. If you have removed asbestos from your home yourself, it will need to be disposed of separately from your normal household waste.

Tenants are able to dispose of asbestos waste free of charge – please contact Customer Services on Freephone **0800 195 5552** for details.

Householders can also contact the City of London, Special Waste Collection Service on **0207 332 3433**.

Some Do's and Don'ts

- ⊙ **DO NOT** panic if you think you may have asbestos in your home. It is only a risk to health if it is damaged or disturbed.
- ⊙ **DO NOT** drill, sand, saw or disturb materials that contain asbestos.
- ⊙ **DO NOT** try to remove large areas of asbestos materials - they need to be removed by a specialist contractor.
- ⊙ **DO NOT** remove Licenceable Asbestos Materials (the higher risk materials) for details contact Customer Services or www.hse.gov.uk/licensing/index
- ⊙ **DO** treat asbestos with respect.
- ⊙ **DO** seek advice if you think you have an issue with asbestos in your home.

Remember

Asbestos becomes dangerous when it becomes damaged or disturbed, for example by sawing or drilling in to the material, and any released fibres are breathed in

Do not remove or interfere with Asbestos material without our advice

Note, alterations to your home may require permission, contact Customer Services for information and advice

Who should I contact for more information?

If you have any queries, please contact Customer Services between 8am and 5pm, Monday to Friday on:

**Freephone
0800 195 5552**

or email:

customerservices@suttonhousingpartnership.org.uk

or visit our web site:

www.suttonhousingpartnership.org.uk

You can also visit our offices at:

**Sutton Housing Partnership
Sutton Gate
1 Carshalton Road
Sutton SMI 4LE**

Office opening hours:

Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm

Our reception opens at:

8.45am for visitors

Staff will be available to take your enquiries from 9am.

This is Sutton Housing Partnership's leaflet, **Asbestos**. If you need a translation of this leaflet please tick the box for the language required and complete the form below or call 0800 195 5552.

Kjo është fletushka e Partneritetit të Sutton-it për Banim, Asbestos. Nëse ju nevojitet përkthimi i kësaj fletushke, ju lusim shenoni katrorin e gjuhës së kërkuar dhe kompletini formën e mëposhtme apo telefononi në 0800 195 5552.

Albanian

هذا كتيب شراكة Sutton عن الأسبست. إذا احتجت ترجمة لهذا الكتيب فالرجاء وضع علامة بصندوق اللغة التي ترغبها وأكمل النموذج أدناه أو اتصل برقم: 0800 195 5552.

Arabic

এটি হচ্ছে সUTTON হাউজিং পার্টনারশীপের লিফলেট, এসবেস্টস। আপনি যদি এ লিফলেটের একটি অনুবাদ চান, তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে আপনার প্রয়োজনীয় ভাষার পাশে টিক চিহ্ন দিন এবং নীচের ফর্মটি পূরণ করুন অথবা 0800 195 5552 নাম্বারে ফোন করুন।

Bengali

這是一份 Sutton 住房協會的宣傳冊《石棉問題》。如果您需要該宣傳冊的譯本，請在所需的語言方格中打勾，填寫下列表格，您也可致電 0800 195 5552。

Chinese

આ સટન હાઉસીંગ પાર્ટનરશીપની પવિકા, એસબેસ્ટોસ છે. જો તમને આ પવિકાના ભાષાંતરની જરૂર હોય, તે કૃપા કરીને તમારી પસંદગીની ભાષાના ખાનામાં ટીક કરી, નીચે આપેલું ફોર્મ ભરો અથવા તો 0800 195 5552 પર ફોન કરો.

Gujarati

यह सटन हाऊजिंग पार्टनरशिप का पर्चा है। ऐस्बेसटोज़। यदि आपको इस पर्चे का अनुवाद चाहिए, तो आपको जिस भाषा में अनुवाद चाहिए उसी के खाने में सही का निशान लगाकर नीचे दिया फार्म भरें, या नंबर 0800 195 5552 पर फोन करें।

Hindi

یہ سٹن ہاؤسنگ پارٹنرشپ والوں کا 'ایبیسٹوس' کے موضوع پر ایک دستی مراملہ ہے۔ اگر آپ کو اس دستی مراملے کا ترجمہ چاہیے تو اپنی مطلوبہ زبان کے خانے میں نشان لگائیں اور نیچے دیا ہوا فارم بھریں یا پھر ہمیں کال کریں 0800 195 5552.

Urdu

Many publications can be downloaded directly from our website: www.suttonhousingpartnership.org.uk. Click on the 'accessibility' button to visit our website designed for those with a visual impairment. Otherwise if you need any of the information in this document in large print, braille or audiotape please tick the box and complete the form.

Name

Address

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Please return to:
Sutton Housing Partnership Limited
Sutton Gate
1 Carshalton Road
Sutton
Surrey SM1 4LE

