

# em6

## asbestos essentials

### Non-licensed tasks

This information will help employers and the self-employed to comply with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006.

It is also useful for trade union and employee safety representatives.

Only carry out this work if you are properly trained and have the right equipment.

#### Remember:

- Asbestos fibres can cause lung cancer and lung diseases.
- You must be trained to work safely with asbestos materials.
- You must be trained to use PPE and RPE properly.



A 'dust mask' doubled up for more protection is useless. You need a respirator.



Disposable RPE worn correctly

## Personal protective equipment (PPE)

### Equipment and method sheet



### What this sheet covers

This sheet describes what personal protective equipment (PPE) you need.

It also describes respiratory protective equipment (RPE).

**PPE and RPE are your last lines of defence against asbestos fibres. Follow the methods in the task guidance sheets to avoid fibres being released into the air.**

#### Overalls

- Disposable overalls. Type 5 (BS EN ISO 13982-1) are suitable. Cotton overalls hold dust and need specialist laundering.
- You may need waterproof overalls for outdoor work.
- Wear one size too big - this will help to prevent ripping at the seams.
- If the cuffs are loose, seal them with tape.
- Avoid wearing a long-sleeved shirt - these are difficult to cover properly.
- Wear the overall legs over footwear. Tucking them in lets dust into footwear.
- Wear the hood over the RPE straps.
- Dispose of used overalls as asbestos waste.

**Caution: Never take used overalls home.**

#### Gloves

- If you wear protective gloves, use single-use disposable gloves. If you must use latex gloves, use only 'low protein powder-free' gloves.
- Dispose of used gloves as asbestos waste.

#### Footwear

- Boots are preferable to disposable overshoes which cause a slipping risk.

**Caution: Never use laced boots, these are very difficult to clean properly.**

#### Respiratory protective equipment (RPE)

- Use suitable RPE with an Assigned Protection Factor of 20 or more.
- Suitable types of RPE:
  - disposable respirator to standards EN149 (type FFP3) or EN1827 (type FMP3);
  - half mask respirator (to standard EN140) with P3 filter; or
  - semi-disposable respirator (to EN405) with P3 filter.



Disposable RPE worn correctly



Disposable RPE worn incorrectly

- This equipment should be suitable for most short duration non-licensed work. Workers should select a make and size that fits them.
- This equipment is **not** suitable for people with beards or stubble, or for long periods of continuous use; you need powered equipment for such situations.
- More information on the selection of suitable RPE is given in HSG247, HSG53 or from suppliers. See 'Further information' and 'More help'.

#### Planning and preparation

- Plan for and practice emergency procedures.
- Workers need to be fit tested to make sure that the RPE fits them properly.
- Arrange fit testing and training before the work starts, ask the supplier for help or contact BOHS ([www.bohs.org](http://www.bohs.org) or 01332 298101). Also see 'More help'.

#### Using RPE

- Workers must be medically fit to wear RPE - seek medical advice if you are not sure.
- All types of RPE restrict what the wearer can do. It is uncomfortable to wear for long periods.
- The RPE has to be worn all the time and until the worker is away from the contaminated air.
- Fit and wear the respirator in accordance with the manufacturers instructions.
- Place the straps firmly around the top and back of the head. The respirator should be tight against the face.
- When using disposable RPE, pinch the top of the respirator over the nose.
- Carry out a fit check in accordance with the manufacturers instructions
- If the worker wears spectacles, they should put them on now. They must not create a gap between the mask and face.
- Put the overall hood over the straps.
- At the end of the shift, take off RPE last and, if it is disposable, put it in the asbestos waste. If it is any other type decontaminate, clean and store it properly for the next use.
- With half-mask type change filters regularly - your supplier may be able to advise you how often. Dispose of used filters as asbestos waste.

**Caution: Never leave the respirator lying around where it can collect dust. Never dangle the respirator round your neck.**

#### Maintenance of non disposable equipment

- Keep RPE clean and in good working order - follow the manufacturers' instructions.
- Inspect and check RPE for damage every time. Carry out thorough checks monthly (or every three months if used infrequently). Inspect all parts including valves and seals. Replace the respirator as appropriate.
- Clean RPE after use and store in a safe place away from contamination.

**Caution: Make sure the correct filter is fitted.**

#### Training

- Make sure that RPE users know:
  - how to check their equipment is working properly before they put it on;
  - how to check that it fits;
  - how to identify and replace worn or defective parts; and
  - that they know about the limitations of the RPE they are using.
- Instruct users to throw away disposable RPE/PPE as asbestos waste after one use.
- Tell workers to stop work and leave the area if they think their RPE is not working properly.



For some tasks, non disposable RPE is needed

### MORE HELP

- **Licensed asbestos contractors, and training providers** - HSE's Infoline  
Tel: 0845 345 0055  
Textphone: 0845 408 9577  
e-mail: [hse.infoline@natbrit.com](mailto:hse.infoline@natbrit.com)  
and at [www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/licensing/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/licensing/index.htm)
- **HSE priced and free publications** -  
HSE Books Tel: 01787 881165  
and at [www.hsebooks.co.uk](http://www.hsebooks.co.uk)
- **More asbestos pictures** -  
[www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/gallery.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/gallery.htm)
- **British Standards** - BSI Customer Services, 389 Chiswick High Road, London W4 4AL Tel: 020 8996 9001 Fax: 020 8996 7001 e-mail: [cservices@bsi-global.com](mailto:cservices@bsi-global.com) and at [www.bsi-global.com](http://www.bsi-global.com)
- **Trade associations** - the Asbestos Removal Contractors Association (ARCA) Tel: 01283 531126 Website: [www.arcaweb.org.uk](http://www.arcaweb.org.uk), or the Asbestos Control and Abatement Division (ACAD) Tel: 01325 466704
- **Disposal of asbestos waste** - [www.environment-agency.co.uk](http://www.environment-agency.co.uk), [www.sepa.org.uk](http://www.sepa.org.uk), or [www.netregs.gov.uk/netregs](http://www.netregs.gov.uk/netregs)
- These equipment and method sheets and task (a) sheets can be downloaded free from [www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/essentials/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/essentials/index.htm)
- See sheet a0 for details of more guidance

This guidance is issued by the Health and Safety Executive. Following the guidance is not compulsory and you are free to take other action. But if you do follow the guidance you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. Health and safety inspectors seek to secure compliance with the law and may refer to this guidance as illustrating good practice.

### Further information

- *Asbestos: The licensed contractors' guide* HSG247 HSE Books 2006 ISBN 978 0 7176 2874 2
- *Respiratory protective equipment at work: A practical guide* HSG53 (Third edition) HSE Books 2005 ISBN 978 0 7176 2904 6
- *Fit testing of respiratory protective equipment facepieces* HSE Information Operational Circular OC 282/28 [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/fittesting.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/fittesting.pdf)

This document is available at [www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/essentials/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/essentials/index.htm)

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Published by the Health and Safety Executive 12/07