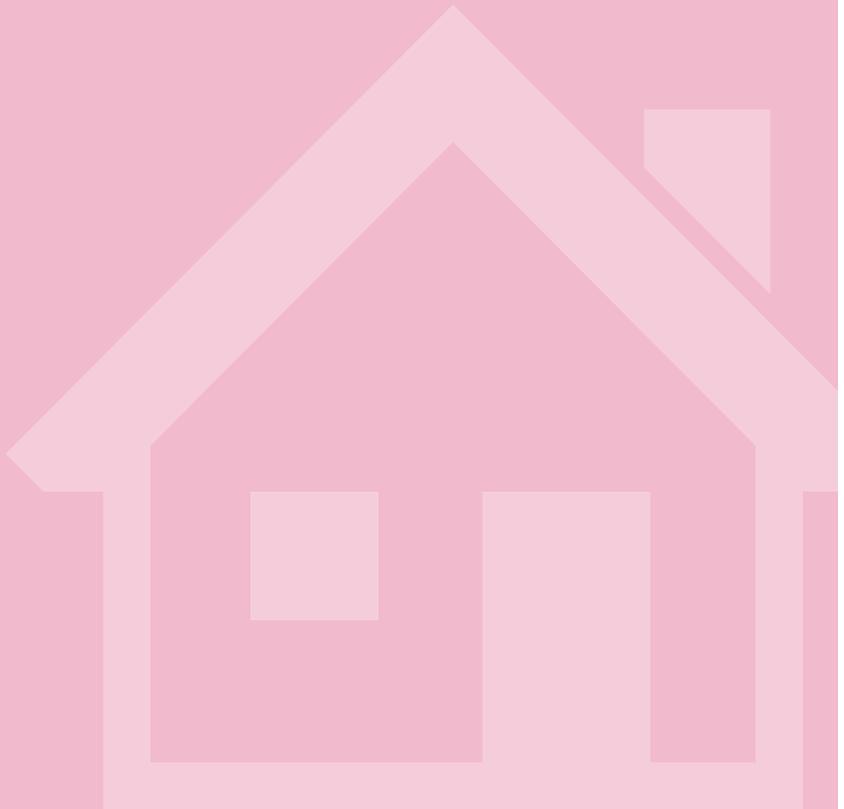


# A Guide to Asbestos in your Home

Useful information for home owners





## What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring material which has been widely used for 150 years. Although an ideal fireproofing and insulation material, asbestos can cause problems if it is disturbed or damaged.

### STAY SAFE! DO NOT TAKE RISKS

- ✓ If asbestos is in good condition leave it alone
- ✓ If asbestos is damaged, fibres and dust can be released
- ✓ Breathing asbestos fibres and dust can be harmful
- ✓ If you think you have asbestos containing products in your house or you are unsure, SEEK ADVICE before you take any action.

## When can asbestos be a risk?

If materials containing asbestos are in good condition and unlikely to be disturbed or damaged, there is no risk.

When asbestos materials become damaged or age, they can release fibres into the air. These can be breathed deep into the lung where they may stay for a long time, potentially causing damage. Where very high levels of these fibres are breathed in, there is a risk of lung diseases, including cancer.

People who have worked with asbestos for many years as part of their job or washed the dusty clothing of those who worked with asbestos are most likely to be affected. Workplace Regulations now protect such people.

## Why would I have asbestos in my home?

Asbestos has been used in the UK from the end of the 19th century. Large quantities of asbestos were used in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s.

Use of asbestos itself was banned in 1969 and in 1999 it became illegal to use any materials containing asbestos. Safer materials have been developed to take the place of the many materials containing asbestos.

## How can I tell if something contains asbestos?

Generally it is not possible to tell whether a product contains asbestos as modern asbestos-free materials often look similar. It needs people with specific skills and experience to do this and even then, only a laboratory test can positively identify whether a material contains asbestos.

Since 1976, British manufacturers have labelled their products to show they contain asbestos and since 1986 all products containing asbestos carry the European label. From 1999, the manufacture and importation of asbestos and asbestos products in the UK has been banned.

If you wish to have a material in your home checked to see if it contains

asbestos, remember to make sure the consultant or laboratory you choose to carry out the work is UKAS accredited.

## Where will I find asbestos?

Asbestos can still be found in properties. Although asbestos was mainly used in commercial buildings it's also found in some houses. Asbestos materials may be found in:

- Some warm air heating systems, electric storage heaters (up to 1976) and in flameless catalytic heaters (up to 1988) and some early 'coal effect' gas fires.
- Sprayed asbestos generally used as fire protection in ducts, firebreaks, panels, partitions, soffit boards, ceiling panels and around structural steel work.
- Lagging of pipes and boilers although rarely found in houses.
- Some ceiling tiles.
- Insulated boarding used for fire protection, thermal insulation, partitioning and ducts
- Asbestos cement products either in flat or corrugated sheets used for roofing or wall cladding more commonly for garages.
- Other asbestos cement products include gutters, rainwater pipes and water tanks.
- Some textured coatings of which the most commonly one known was "artex".
- Vinyl or thermoplastic floor tiles.
- Seals on cooker doors, older fire blankets.
- Old oven gloves and fire blankets.

Don't worry – none of these uses of asbestos are a health hazard unless the material is broken or flaking.

## What do I do if I find asbestos?

If you think you have some asbestos in your home but it is well sealed and not damaged it may be best to leave it alone rather than disturb it.

Unless it is clear that a material does not contain asbestos such as glass, wood, brick or stone, care should always be taken. Any work such as sanding, drilling cutting etc that disturbs walls, floors, doors, ceilings, roof surface could release fibres into your home.

Don't remove asbestos unnecessarily. Removing it can be more dangerous than simply leaving it alone.

## If you think you have asbestos and it is broken or flaking - don't touch it

If there is damaged or deteriorating asbestos materials in your home these can release fibres and dust so you should consider removal or encapsulation.

## Can I remove asbestos materials myself?

If you have asbestos materials in your home, SEEK ADVICE before doing any work as some asbestos materials such as sprayed asbestos, lagging or insulating boards must always be removed by contractors with a special licence issued by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). These licensed contractors have to follow regulation to ensure asbestos is safely removed. The HSE have a list of asbestos licence holders. They can be contacted on 0845 345 0055 or [www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/licensing/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/licensing/index.htm)

**Don't remove the asbestos or take a sample yourself without seeking advice**

### **Does North Lanarkshire Council remove asbestos from its own housing stock?**

North Lanarkshire Council does not automatically remove all asbestos from its own housing stock. Asbestos materials that are in good condition and cannot be easily damaged are best left where they are. This is because removal of asbestos can lead to higher levels of fibres in the air for some time.

Asbestos materials that have a little damage can sometimes be repaired. This can be done by sealing or enclosing the material.

If asbestos material is badly damaged (or if there is any danger that it could release fibres) we will remove it. Most asbestos materials (sprayed asbestos, lagging or insulating boards) must always be removed by special contractors. These contractors have special licences issued by the government to do this. They have to follow regulations to ensure asbestos is safely removed and disposed of.

Sometimes it is dangerous to have asbestos materials removed - for instance fire-protection materials - without replacing them with a suitable alternative.

### **How do I dispose of asbestos material?**

Do NOT throw asbestos in the bin. The Council does not collect or dispose of asbestos waste and cannot accept asbestos materials at any of its Waste Disposal and Recycling Centres.

If you use the Council's approved disposal contractor to uplift asbestos waste products, the Council will pay half of the disposal cost (excluding removal costs). For further details, contact the Waste Management Department on 01698 506235.

As mentioned before, if you employ a company to carry out the work on your behalf you must make sure that they are a legitimate licensed contractor who will comply with all waste management requirements. Such commercial operators must be registered carriers and fill in a consignment note before transporting asbestos waste for disposal. For further advice on registration, they should contact the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) on 0141 945 6350.

Although householders are not required to fill in a consignment note to carry asbestos to a licensed facility, you remain under a duty of care to ensure that the law is complied with.

## Further Information

### North Lanarkshire Council

Can provide general advice about asbestos in your home.

**Tel: 0800 6781 166**

**Email: [asbestos@northlan.gov.uk](mailto:asbestos@northlan.gov.uk)**

### Health and Safety Executive

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) provide asbestos health and safety information including a list of asbestos licence holders.

**Tel: 0845 345 0055**

**[www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/index.htm)**

**Under One Roof** provides impartial advice on repairs and maintenance for flat owners in Scotland.

**Email: [info@underoneroof.scot](mailto:info@underoneroof.scot)**

**[www.underoneroof.scot](http://www.underoneroof.scot)**

### North Lanarkshire Council

#### Waste Management

If you use the Council's approved disposal contractor to uplift asbestos waste products, the Council will pay half of the disposal cost (excluding removal costs).

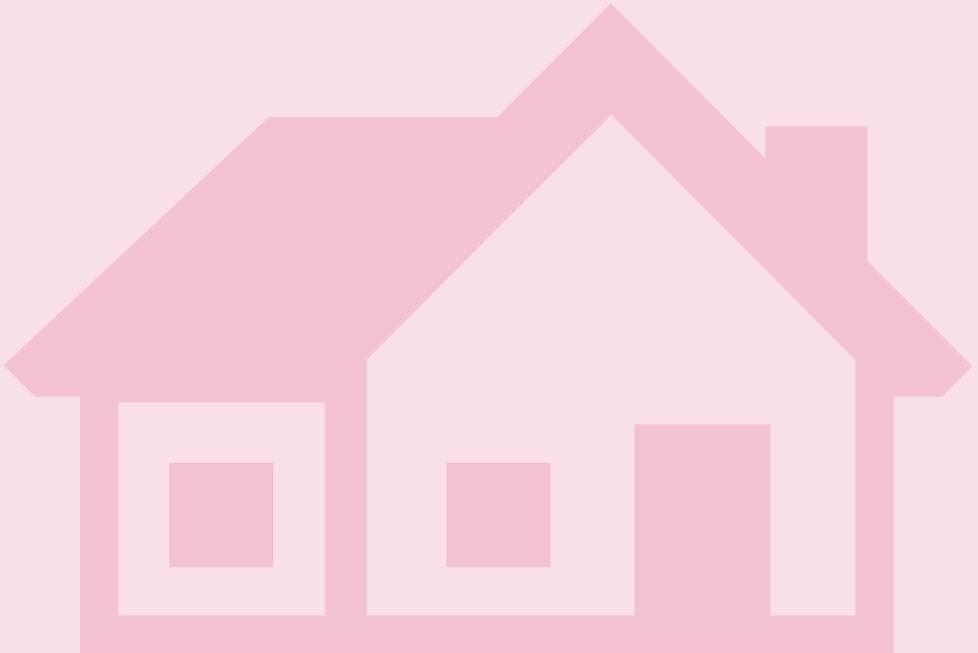
**Tel: 01698 506235**

### Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)

Commercial operators transporting asbestos waste for disposal must be registered asbestos licence holders. For further advice on the registration process

**Tel: 0141 945 6350**

**[www.sepa.org.uk](http://www.sepa.org.uk)**





## Contact Us

We have a range of leaflets on different topics available on request. If you would like further information on the types of assistance available to homeowners please contact:

**North Lanarkshire Council**  
**Enterprise and Housing Resources**  
**Private Sector Solutions**

**Tel: 01698 274179**

**Email: [privatesector@northlan.gov.uk](mailto:privatesector@northlan.gov.uk)**

**[www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/schemeofassistance](http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/schemeofassistance)**

This information can be made available in a range of languages and formats, including large print, braille, audio, electronic and accessible formats.

MANDARIN

如果你需要用其他语言或者其他格式表示这些信息，请与我们联系以便讨论你的要求。

POLISH

Jeżeli potrzebujesz tą informację w innym języku lub formacie, proszę, skontaktuj się z nami, żeby przedyskutować Twoją potrzebę.

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