



Asbestos in the home

Your questions answered



If you need the leaflet about Asbestos in the home in another language or format please call our translations service on 020 8583 2299, Minicom on 020 8583 3122.

Albanian Nese keni nevojte qe fletushken lidhur me Azbest te keni ne gjuhen shqipe ose ne ndonje format tjeter ju lutemi kontaktoni 020 8583 2299 ose minikom 020 8583 3122.

Arabic اذا كنت تحتاج المنشور المخصص لطالبي اللجوء واللجئين في المملكة المتحدة باللغة العربية او بشكل اخر الرجاء الاتصال على 020 8583 2299 او على المينيكوم 020 8583 3122.

Farsi اگر شما کتابچه اطلاعات در باره مهاجرین و پناهنده گان دربریتانیا را به زبان فارسی و یا شکل دیگری میخواهید لطفاً به شماره تلفون 020 8583 2299 و یا شماره مینی کام 020 8583 3122 تماس بگیرید.

Gujarati જો તમને આ પત્રિકા, 'રિફ્યુજીસ અને અસાઇલમ સીકરર્સ ઇન યુ.કે.' (યુ.કે.માં શરણાર્થીઓ કે નિર્વાસિત વ્યક્તિઓ સંબંધી આપની માહિતી)ની નકલ ગુજરાતીમાં અથવા બીજા કોઈ સ્વરૂપમાં જોઈતી હોય તો, મહારાષ્ટ્રની કરી આ નંબર પર ટેલિફોન કરો: 020 8583 2299 અથવા મિનિકોમ નંબર: 020 8583 3122

Hindi यदि आपको यू.के. में रिफ्यूजी (शरणार्थी) और असाइलम सीकरर्स (पनाह मांगने वाले) के बारे में पत्रिका की कॉपी हिन्दी में या किसी और रूप में चाहिए तो कृपया 020 8583 2299 पर फोन करें या 020 8583 3122 पर मिनीकॉम करें।

Punjabi ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਯੂ.ਕੇ ਵਿਚ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਰਿਫਿਊਜੀ ਅਤੇ ਅਸਾਈਲਮ ਸੀਕਰਜ਼ (ਸ਼ਰਨਾਰਥੀ ਅਤੇ ਪਨਾਹਗੀਰ ਲੋਕ) ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਇਕ ਪਰਚਾ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਸ਼ਕਲ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 020 8583 2297 'ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜਾਂ ਇਸ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਮਿਨੀਕਾਮ ਕਰੋ: 0208 583 3122

Urdu اگر آپ کو رہنمائی چاہیے یا پناہ حاصل کرنے والوں کے متعلق ایف اے ڈی آر ڈی یا کسی اور تہذیب/ثقافت/ساخت میں درکار ہے، تو براہ کرم اس فون نمبر 0208 583 2299 یا مینی کوم نمبر 0208 583 3122 پر رابطہ کریں

Somali Haddii aad u baahantahay warqaddan ku saabsan Asbestos guriga lagu arkay oo ku qroan afsoomaali ama ku daabacan qaab kale fadlan la soo xidhiidh 020 8583 2299 ama minicom 020 8583 3122.

tenant's homes by Hounslow Homes appointed contractors would include a risk assessment to check whether they are likely to disturb asbestos. Where asbestos is found to be damaged or may be disturbed it will be managed safely either by encapsulation or removal by specialist contractors. If asbestos is found to be in good condition it will be left in place.

If asbestos is removed from your home and disposed of safely, it is no longer a problem, or if it is sealed safely (encapsulated), again it will not be a problem.

What is Hounslow Homes doing?
Before we undertake any improvements or repairs to your home we, or our contractor, will do a risk assessment to asses whether asbestos could be disturbed during the planned work. We will ensure all known asbestos containing materials are in a safe condition. Hounslow Homes use the services of a specialist asbestos surveyor and has a team of other qualified

surveyors, who can undertake asbestos surveys for the use of managing asbestos.

All members of our in-house trades team have received training in asbestos awareness. Hounslow Homes has surveyed a sample of its housing stock and compiled an Asbestos Register that tells us where asbestos may be found. The register is made available to all contractors and workmen who carry out work in your home so that measures can be taken to prevent accidental release of asbestos fibres. As refurbishment works are being carried out through improvement programmes, asbestos materials are being removed where they present an on-going risk and where they are found to be in good condition they will be left in place. Hounslow Homes' policy is that asbestos is left in place or encapsulated where it is in good condition and when this is possible. Where it is damaged or likely to create a future hazard it will be removed. Should asbestos

need to be removed from your home you will be notified accordingly. Removal may take several hours and require the affected part of the house to be sealed off.

If you suspect that asbestos containing materials are damaged in your home or you suspect them to have been fly tipped, please contact Customer Services Centre on free phone 0800 085 6575.

Asbestos containing materials that are in good condition and which are not disturbed present no risks and do not need removing.

Home owners and leaseholders
Home owners and leaseholders are responsible for any asbestos in their homes. The law only applies if asbestos in homes could harm anyone other than the owner. Homeowners are strongly advised to take sensible precautions and are advised to use the links below for the best advice on carrying out DIY work on asbestos.

For more information visit:
www.hounslow.gov.uk/index/business/health_and_safety/asbestos.htm
www.environment-agency.gov.uk
www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/essentials/index.htm
www.asbestoswatchdog.co.uk/residential

This link gives details of HSE's appointed licensed removal companies:
webcommunities.hse.gov.uk/connect.ti/asbestos.licensing/view?objectId=196

Asbestos in the home

Your safety is important to us, so we want to explain why and what you can do if you are concerned about asbestos. This leaflet explains what it is, where it is found, why it might be a problem, the health risks and how to deal with asbestos waste.

What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral which has been mined and processed. It is composed of fibres which are so small that most can only be detected under a microscope. In its raw form it looks like small rock fragments but the milling process mixes it with other compounds, making it hard to identify by just looking at it, for example it would be difficult to look at two different types of floor tiles and know for sure which one contained asbestos.

Asbestos has been widely used in a variety of building and household products due to its unique properties, which include its strength, stability under extreme heat or cold and resistance to chemicals and electricity. There are three main

types of asbestos which have been used commercially:

- Crocidolite or 'blue asbestos'
- Amosite or 'brown asbestos'
- Chrysotile or 'white asbestos'

Properties built since the mid-1980s are very unlikely to contain asbestos in the fabric of the building and properties built after 2000 are extremely unlikely to contain asbestos anywhere in the building. Once the risks to health were realised, controls were gradually introduced and the import of all asbestos is now banned in the UK.

High concentrations of asbestos fibres can be generated during structural alterations, major refurbishment, minor repairs and DIY activity.

Where is asbestos in the home?

The list below gives an indication of where asbestos may be in the home, but does not show all possible uses and locations of asbestos materials.

Exterior of building

- Cement panels on garages and sheds
- Cement gutters and downpipes
- Cement Fascia's and soffits
- Some roofing felts
- Some roofing tiles

Interior of building

- Artex – textured coatings
- Cement bath panels
- Service ducts
- Some door linings – Usually boiler cupboards
- Some cold water tanks
- Electric fuse boards and switch gear
- Some toilet cisterns

- Floor tiles
- Sink pads
- Some interior workings of boilers

If there is asbestos in your home and if it is in good condition, the best advice is to leave it undisturbed. The danger only occurs when it is damaged.

When is asbestos a problem?

Asbestos is dangerous when fibres are released, even minor damage can produce many fibres, sometimes directly in the respiratory tract, drilling a hole, for example. Wallpaper scrapers, rubbing down asbestos panels or Artex with sandpaper and removing asbestos panels to gain access to services, also does damage.

Asbestos products can also be damaged accidentally if they are scraped, knocked or vandalised. Cutting asbestos with electrical tools and smashing asbestos products with a hammer are

extremely dangerous and must be avoided at all costs.

- Do treat asbestos with respect
- Don't drill, sand, saw or otherwise disturb any material which may contain asbestos
- Don't carry out D.I.Y. work on any part of your home which you think may contain asbestos. Seek guidance through the Customer Service Centre
- Do soak wallpaper before removing it and if possible use a steam stripper and then gently peel away the paper before decorating
- Don't try to remove any textured coatings from ceilings. Wash areas of flaking paint before re-painting
- Don't try to remove old floor tiles or linoleum. Leave them in place and lay new floor coverings over them
- Do remember: asbestos can be hazardous to health if handled incorrectly



What are the health hazards?

The extensive use of asbestos means it is impossible to avoid exposure to asbestos completely because there is a very low background level of fibres in the atmosphere. However, there is no evidence to suggest that exposure to such low levels are detrimental to health.

The physical presence of asbestos does not necessarily create a health risk. The risk arises from breathing microscopic asbestos fibres that are released through mishandling. Asbestos fibres enter the body through the nose and mouth. They cannot be absorbed through the skin. The body naturally removes any asbestos fibres that you might take in with food and water. The body also removes most of the larger fibres, but tiny fibres can pass into the lung where they can cause disease.

Asbestos dust can cause asbestosis, mesothelioma and

certain types of cancer, for which there is no cure. All asbestos must therefore be considered to be potentially dangerous, although people who have not worked directly with it are extremely unlikely to develop a related disease. There is no known safe level of exposure to asbestos, but there is no doubt that people who work with asbestos materials are at much more risk than householders. The risk to health in the home environment is therefore slight.

What is the likelihood of exposure to asbestos in the home? The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) confirms that there is very low level of fibres in the air everywhere because asbestos has been used extensively in the past. Exposure to this low level of fibres is unlikely to harm people's health.

It is very unlikely that the levels of asbestos fibres found in buildings will be harmful. Any repairs or major works undertaken in