

If there is asbestos in your home, it will not pose a risk unless it has been damaged or disturbed. Only by drilling or cutting asbestos are potentially harmful fibres released into the atmosphere.

What is asbestos?

Asbestos was used as a building material in the UK from the 1950s through to the mid-1980s. It was used for a variety of purposes including fireproofing and insulation. Any building constructed or refurbished before or during 1999 can contain asbestos.

Where was asbestos used?

Asbestos was used in building materials principally to provide thermal insulation and fire protection. It was also used as a filler material in a wide range of building products.

These may include:

- asbestos cement products (guttering, rainwater pipes, water tanks, roofing sheets)
- textured coatings (ceiling finishes)

- floor tiles and textiles
- sprayed coatings on ceilings, walls and beams (fire protection)
- asbestos insulation board
- pipe lagging
- loose asbestos in ceiling or floor cavity.

What are the health risks?

Damaged asbestos products release fibres that can cause serious lung diseases if inhaled. The risk arises when asbestos is damaged or disturbed resulting in the release of airborne asbestos fibres.

Remember that it is **NOT** a hazard unless damaged. If you are unsure if a material contains asbestos it is safer to presume it does and do not tamper with it. Asbestos is quite safe unless damaged or worked on.

Can I still make improvements to my home?

If you want to make an improvement to your home please contact us and let us know. We can advise you of any asbestos containing materials in your home and how to avoid damaging them. You must get

written permission from us before carrying out any improvements or alterations in your home.

How is the asbestos in my home managed?

If your property has not yet been surveyed, we will arrange for a professional asbestos surveying company to examine it. Survey priority will be given to those residents whose homes are due for significant building works to take place. We will contact you to arrange an appointment.

If the survey finds asbestos, there are four options. Depending on the risk, we will:

- seal off the area
- encapsulate or 'coat' the asbestos
- remove asbestos
- leave the asbestos in place with regular checks on its condition.

Asbestos materials which are sound, undamaged and not releasing fibres should not be disturbed.

We ensure that any asbestos is removed, sealed-off or repaired by contractors with a special licence issued by the Government. Approved Licensed Asbestos Removal Contractors (ALARCs) follow strict regulations to make sure asbestos is safely handled.

I think I have asbestos in my home. What should I do?

- don't panic
- leave the asbestos alone
- contact us for professional advice
- do not attempt to remove asbestos containing materials yourself
- never break up or do DIY work on asbestos containing material.