

Our guide to asbestos safety

What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring fibrous mineral that was once used extensively as a popular building material. It was used as an insulator (to keep heat in and cold out) and offered good protection against fire and corrosion. However, it is now known that asbestos can be dangerous. Long-term exposure can lead to serious diseases, including lung cancer and asbestosis, so it is very important that people are aware of the dangers.

Asbestos was officially banned in the UK in 1999, so if your home was built after 2000 it should not be present. If your home is older than this, please don't worry. This factsheet gives advice and information about what to look out for. If you have any concerns about the presence of asbestos in your home, please contact our Customer Services team on 0113 2783335.

Where can asbestos be found?

Asbestos can be found in many building products (both inside and outside a home). This is not a complete list, but common places include in:

- Roof tiles and roof felt
- Gutters and rainwater pipes
- Soffits and fascias
- Cold water tanks
- Pipe insulation
- Textured coatings on ceilings and walls
- Toilet cisterns
- Gaskets and seals on gas appliances
- Floor tiles
- Partition walls
- Panels on or inside fire doors
- Panels behind and inside electrical equipment
- Insulation in old electrical storage heaters

Please Do.....

- Treat asbestos with respect
- Contact us if you think you have damaged asbestos in your home
- Contact us if you are planning any DIY or home improvements
- Help us by keeping any appointments we or our asbestos contractors make with you
- Take care to avoid damaging asbestos materials

Please Don't.....

- Panic—asbestos is safe if left undisturbed
- Attempt to remove any suspected asbestos materials yourself
- Put yourself at risk by carrying out DIY on or next to asbestos materials e.g. drilling/sanding
- Dust, sweep or vacuum areas where asbestos debris may lie

Your Questions Answered

If there is asbestos in my home, why not remove it? Am I not at risk?

When asbestos surveys are carried out, not only do we confirm whether or not materials contain asbestos, we also confirm their condition. Materials containing asbestos in good condition do not pose a risk to your health and sometimes removing it can be more hazardous than leaving it alone. If the material is in poor condition, then the decision will be made to either remove it or make it safe.

I think I may have damaged or disturbed asbestos-containing materials in my home. What should I do?

Do not panic—contact us and we will make arrangements to have the material assessed and sampled if required. We will then decide on the most appropriate action to ensure your safety.

I've heard that Artex contains asbestos. What is it and is it safe?

Artex is a textured decorative coating that used to be widely used on interior walls and ceilings. Some older types of Artex contained very small amounts of asbestos. Artex is safe as long as it is not disturbed i.e. sanded or scraped or drilled through.

Can I paint asbestos-containing materials?

Yes it is safe to paint Artexed walls and ceilings and even insulation board. However, you should never sand the materials or use tools such as wallpaper scrapers on them. To prepare for painting simply wipe the material with a damp cloth to remove any dirt.

I have noticed some pieces of broken floor tile that I have been informed contain asbestos. Am I at risk?

No, even broken pieces of tile are extremely unlikely to release any asbestos fibres. If the tiles do contain asbestos they do need to be disposed of correctly, so please contact us so we can arrange this for you.

If you have any concerns regarding asbestos safety in your home, please contact us immediately on: **Tel: 0113 278 3335 or email us at: **info@lyha.co.uk****



Leeds & Yorkshire
Housing Association