

em7

asbestos essentials

Using damp rags to clean surfaces of minor asbestos contamination

Equipment and method sheet

Non-licensed tasks

This information will help employers and the self-employed to comply with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.

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

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

Remember:

- Asbestos fibres can cause fatal lung disease and lung cancer.
- Check what you're working on before you start.
- Read the safety checklist and sheet a0.
- You must be trained to work safely with asbestos materials.



Wiping up debris with a damp rag

What this sheet covers

This sheet explains how to use rags to clean minor asbestos contamination from smooth, non-absorbent surfaces and equipment.

Equipment

- Bucket of water
- Either cotton rags that do not shed fluff onto clean surfaces, or impregnated rags (eg 'Tak' rags)
- Adhesive tape, to collect small dust deposits
- Asbestos waste bag
- Clear polythene bag

Procedures

- Pick up bigger pieces of debris and put them in a suitable waste container.

Rags

- Impregnated rags do not need soaking.
- Soak the cotton rag in water. Fold in half or quarters. Wring it out.
- Wipe the contaminated surface.
- Refold the rag to give a clean surface.
- Repeat until you have used all the clean surfaces of the rag.
- Put the used rag in a bag. Get a clean rag and repeat cleaning until all surfaces are clean.

Tape

- Tape is only useful for removing small dust deposits. Surfaces may need repeated tape applications.
- Place a strip of tape over the contaminated surface. Peel it off slowly.
- Put the used tape in a bag. Repeat with a fresh piece.

Caution

Never resoak a contaminated rag; this contaminates the water. Make sure you have enough rags for adequate clean-up.

Wastes

- Put bags of used rags and tape in a suitable asbestos waste bag.
- Tape the bag closed.
- You need to ensure you have enough rags to avoid contaminating the water.
- See sheet em9 for disposal.

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