

# Asbestos

## What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral that has been used in the manufacture of building materials to make them more durable, rigid, weather and fire resistant. It has also been used in household products such as ironing boards and oven gloves.

## Why was asbestos used?

It was used for a variety of purposes particularly externally where its natural resistance to the elements resulted in its use in the manufacture of rainwater goods (gutters and rainwater and soil pipes) and artificial roof states and corrugated roofing sheets. It was ideal for thermal insulation and to reduce the risk of fires in homes.

## Where is asbestos likely to be found in the home?

The picture and list below shows some common areas where asbestos-containing materials may be found in the home; the list is not all-inclusive. The list of products that may contain asbestos is a lengthy one. Those listed below are some of the more common sources.

### Exterior

- 1) Roof garage and shed sheets, tiles or roof felt
- 2) Gutters and down pipes
- 3) Fascia

### Interior

- 4) Partition walls
- 5) Panels beneath windows
- 6) Cupboards around domestic boilers
- 7) Panels behind electrical equipment
- 8) Panels behind fires or heaters
- 9) Panels on or inside fire doors
- 10) Bath panels
- 11) Floor tiles
- 12) Textures coatings (artex)
- 13) Gaskets and rope seals inside gas appliances
- 14) Cold water storage tanks



Asbestos was extensively used as a building material in the UK from the 1950s through to the mid-1980s. Any building built before 2000 (houses, factories, offices, schools, hospitals etc) can contain asbestos. The Health and Safety Executive estimates that over 4 million buildings in the UK contain some asbestos materials and it is therefore likely that there will be asbestos containing materials in older residential properties owned by Lambeth.

## Is there a risk to health?

Materials that contain asbestos which are in good condition are not a risk to peoples' health. Check the condition of anything you think may contain asbestos to be sure it remains in good condition and is sealed (e.g. with paint). If you suspect that materials containing asbestos have been damaged please contact local area housing office, Joint Service Centre or, or telephone the Lambeth Service Centre on 020 7926 6000.

## Home Improvements, repairs and DIY

**Before carrying out any works in your home if you have asbestos materials extra care should be taken.**

**When doing DIY it is important to remember:**

- **Do not** drill, cut into, sand or scrape anything you think may contain asbestos when you are carrying out any home improvement, repairs or DIY.
- **Always** soak wallpaper before removing. If possible, use a steam stripper and then gently peel away the paper before redecorating.
- **Do not** try to remove textured coatings (Artex) from ceilings. Wash any area of flaking paint with sugar soap before repainting.
- **Do not** try to remove old floor tiles or linoleum. Leave them in place and lay new floor coverings over them.

### **Advice for tenants and leaseholders**

If you require further information on asbestos in your home please contact us. Either by email at [housing@lambethliving.org.uk](mailto:housing@lambethliving.org.uk) providing your name, address and tenancy reference number, by phone call 020 7926 6000 or visit your nearest housing office.

### **Advice for leaseholders**

Leaseholders are responsible for repairing and maintaining their own properties, including any materials that may contain asbestos. Specialist laboratories can test suspect materials to confirm whether or not they contain asbestos.

As a leaseholder you are responsible for the safe removal and consignment of asbestos materials to a licensed waste tip by your removal contractor. Please ensure that you obtain a copy of the waste consignment note from your removal contractor as proof of safe disposal of hazardous waste for your own records. Failure of safe disposal of hazardous waste will incur a minimum fine of £5,000.

If you suspect that materials containing asbestos are present or damaged please contact specialist laboratory contractors who are licensed (accredited) to test suspect materials to confirm whether or not they contain asbestos.

### **United Kingdom Accreditation Society (UKCAS)**

21 47 High Street  
Feltham  
Middlesex  
TW13 4UN

Phone: 020 8917 8400  
Website: [www.ukcas.com](http://www.ukcas.com)

If you want to have asbestos material repaired or removed, you can obtain details of local licensed asbestos removal contractors from:

### **Asbestos Removal Contractors Association (ARCA)**

237 Branston Road  
Burton-Upon-Trent  
Staffordshire  
DE14 3BT

Phone: 01283 531 126  
Website: [www.arca.org.uk](http://www.arca.org.uk)

**Remember, materials containing asbestos that are in good condition are safe!**