

Asbestos Safety Information

March 2022



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What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring material which has been used for over 150 years. Although it is an ideal fireproofing and insulation material, asbestos can cause health problems if it is disturbed or damaged.

Why would I have asbestos in my home?

Asbestos containing materials (ACMs) have been used in the UK from the end of the 19th century. Asbestos fibres are strong and resistant to heat and chemicals, and once mined and processed it was used in the manufacture of a large number of buildings, fireproofing and insulation materials.

The use of asbestos was banned in 1999 and it became illegal to use any material containing asbestos. Some have been removed but asbestos containing materials are still present in many buildings, including workplaces, commercial and public buildings, and private houses.

Safer materials have been developed to take the place of the many materials containing asbestos.

Eildon has a duty to manage the asbestos in its properties under the **Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012**.

Is it dangerous?

Don't panic if there is asbestos in your home. It is usually only a problem if it is disturbed. If it is in good condition, it is safe and won't be removed.

If you have asbestos in your home, we will inspect it on an annual basis to make sure it is still safe.

When asbestos containing materials become damaged, there is a risk that the fibres could be released into the air. If you are exposed to them over a long period of time, this can cause respiratory damage.

If the asbestos is damaged, we will employ a licensed contractor to make it safe or remove it.

How can I tell if something contains asbestos?

Generally it is not possible to tell whether a product contains asbestos as modern asbestos-free materials often look similar. It needs people with specific skills and experience to do this and even then, only a laboratory can positively identify whether a material contains asbestos. We use specialist contractors to carry out surveys, sampling and testing of any suspected materials.

Asbestos can be typically found in the following places within a home:

- Older vinyl/thermoplastic floor tiles
- Heater cupboard linings and doors
- Flue pipes for older gas appliances
- Older electrical fuse boxes
- Wall panelling
- Rain water goods
- Soffit and fascia boards at roof eaves and gable
- Textured coatings (e.g. “artex” on ceilings and walls)
- Water tanks and insulation
- Pipe lagging
- Older toilet cisterns and bath panels

What do I do if I find asbestos?

- Do not disturb it. If the material is in good condition leave it alone.
- If you think you have asbestos in your home but it is well sealed and not damaged, it is usually best to leave it in place.
- Unless it is clear that a material does not contain asbestos, such as glass, wood, brick or stone, care should always be taken.
- Any work such as sanding, drilling, or cutting that disturbs walls, floors, doors, ceilings or roof surfaces could release fibres into your home.
- Many textured coatings within your home could also contain traces of asbestos; therefore samples of the coating must be taken to ensure it is free from asbestos prior to any disturbance in materials.

If you have any queries or concerns please do not hesitate to contact our office on **03000 200 217**.



EILDON HOUSING ASSOCIATION – HOW TO CONTACT US



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