

# a14

## asbestos essentials

### Non-licensed tasks

#### Essential information

**Important:** You must read sheet a0 *Introduction to asbestos essentials*

Also read the following sheets:

**em0** Risk assessments and plans of work

**em1** What to do if you discover or accidentally disturb asbestos during your work

**em2** Information, instruction and training

**em5** Wetting asbestos materials

**em6** Personal protective equipment (including RPE)

**em7** Using damp rags to clean surfaces of minor asbestos contamination

**em8** Personal decontamination

**em9** Disposal of asbestos waste

# Removing asbestos cement (AC) sheets, gutters etc and dismantling a small AC structure

### What this sheet covers

This sheet describes good practice when you need to remove AC sheets, gutters, drains, ridge caps etc on a small scale, or dismantle a small structure (eg shed or garage) as long as AC stays intact during removal. If the AC starts to break up creating significant dust then the work will be notifiable non-licensed work (NNLW) – see sheet a0 *Introduction to asbestos essentials*.

This sheet does not apply to large scale work or mechanical demolition – a full risk assessment and plan of work will need to be prepared.

This sheet is not appropriate if other asbestos-containing materials are present, eg lagging, limpet or insulating board. Use an HSE-licensed contractor for such work.

### Preparing the work area

- Ensure safe access – you may need a mobile access platform.
- Restrict access – minimise the number of people present.
- Close doors. Use tape and notices to warn others.
- Ensure adequate lighting.

### Equipment

- 500- and 1000-gauge polythene sheeting and duct tape
- Warning tape and notices
- Bolt cutter
- Webbing straps and rope
- Garden-type sprayer containing wetting agent
- Bucket of water and rags
- Asbestos waste bag
- Clear polythene bag
- Lockable skip for larger quantities of waste
- Asbestos warning stickers

### Caution

AC roofs are always fragile and cannot bear weight.

### Caution

It is dangerous to seal over exhaust vents from gas-fired equipment. Can the equipment be turned off?

### Caution

There may be AC debris on the ground. Be careful not to crush this.



AC sheets used as roofing

### Personal protective equipment (PPE) – see sheet em6



- Provide:
  - disposable overalls fitted with a hood;
  - boots without laces (laced boots are hard to decontaminate);
  - respiratory protective equipment (RPE).

### Procedure

- Check with the premises owner that only AC is present.
- Protect nearby surfaces from contamination. Cover with 500-gauge polythene sheeting and fix with duct tape to non-asbestos surfaces.

### Overlaying AC sheets

- Can you overlay sheets with non-asbestos material instead of removing the AC?
- If so, attach the material to existing purlins. Avoid drilling through the AC. If you cannot avoid drilling, see sheet a9.

### Removal

- Avoid or minimise breaking the AC.
- If fasteners hold the sheets in place, dampen and remove them and place them in the asbestos waste bag.
- If the sheets are bolted in place, dampen and cut the bolts while avoiding contact with the AC.
- Remove the bolts or fixings carefully and place them in the asbestos waste bag.
- Unbolt, or use cutters to release gutters, drain pipes, ridge caps etc. Avoid contact with the AC.
- Lower large pieces to the ground. Don't drop them or use rubble chutes. Stack sheets carefully.
- Where there are several AC sheets and other large items, place them in a lockable skip.

### Other hazards

Work at height – see [www.hse.gov.uk/work-at-height](http://www.hse.gov.uk/work-at-height). Take precautions to avoid falls.

Work on fragile roofs – see [www.hse.gov.uk/construction](http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction). Fragile roofs cannot bear weight.

Electrical hazards – see [www.hse.gov.uk/electricity](http://www.hse.gov.uk/electricity). Get a competent electrician to isolate and reconnect electricity supply.

Manual handling – see [www.hse.gov.uk/msd](http://www.hse.gov.uk/msd). Plan how to remove and handle heavy material and articles safely.

Confined spaces – see [www.hse.gov.uk/confinedspace](http://www.hse.gov.uk/confinedspace).

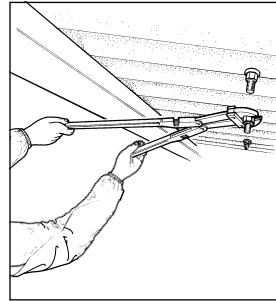
Slips and trips – see [www.hse.gov.uk/slips](http://www.hse.gov.uk/slips). Floors protected with polythene become very slippery when wet.

There may be other hazards – you need to consider them all.

### Further reading

Health and safety in roof work HSG33 (Fourth edition) HSE Books 2012 [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg33.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg33.htm)

- Double-wrap large pieces in 1000-gauge polythene sheeting. Seal with duct tape.
- Attach asbestos warning stickers.
- Place small pieces in the asbestos waste bag.



Cut the bolts while avoiding contact with the asbestos cement. Double-wrap large pieces in 1000-gauge polythene sheeting and seal with duct tape

### Cleaning and disposal

- Clean the equipment and the area with damp rags.
- Check for debris in fasteners or bolt holes. Clean with damp rags.
- Put debris, used rags, polythene sheeting and other waste in the asbestos waste bag and tape it closed.
- Dispose of contaminated webbing and rope as 'asbestos waste'.
- Put the asbestos waste bag in a clear polythene bag and tape it closed.
- Disposal – see sheet em9.

### Personal decontamination

See sheet em8.

### Clearance and checking off

- Visually inspect the area to make sure that it has been cleaned properly.
- Clearance air sampling is not normally required.
- Get the premises owner, dutyholder or client to check off the job.

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