

em4 asbestos essentials

Non-licensed tasks

This information will help employers, including the self-employed, comply with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006, to control exposure and protect health.

It is also useful for trade union representatives.

Asbestos fibre causes lung cancer and lung diseases.

This sheet describes the Type H vacuum cleaner, how to use it to minimise asbestos fibre releases during a task, and how to use it to clean contaminated items.

The cleaner must comply with BS EN 5415 2.2 Supplement No.1. No other type of cleaner is suitable

Never use domestic vacuum cleaners, even those fitted with HEPA (high efficiency particle arrester) filters.

Main points

- Check it out before you start work.
- Read the safety checklist on the task sheet.

Using a Type H vacuum cleaner for asbestos

Equipment and method sheet

Equipment

- Type H vacuum cleaners come with a range of attachments.
- You can either purchase or hire a Type H vacuum cleaner.
- Ensure hired cleaners are clean and in good working order on receipt.

Possible problems

- Reduced suction:
 - You have a long extension cable, resulting in low supply voltage.
 - The waste bag is full. Get it emptied by an HSE-licensed contractor.
 - The hose has blocked - clearing it can release asbestos. Either clear it carefully or get help from an HSE-licensed contractor.

Procedures

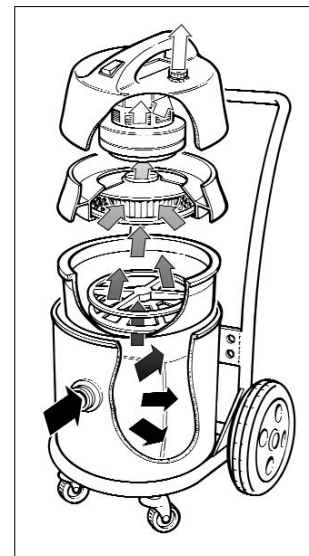
Vacuuming

- Pick up bigger pieces of debris and put them in a suitable waste container.
- Vacuum clean with care: it is easy to disturb asbestos fibres make them airborne and breathe them in.
- Very wet material can damage the HEPA filter.
- Clean floors, carpets and fabrics with the adjustable floor attachment
- Clean areas of limited access with the tapered attachment.
- Clean solid surfaces such as desk tops with the flat attachment.

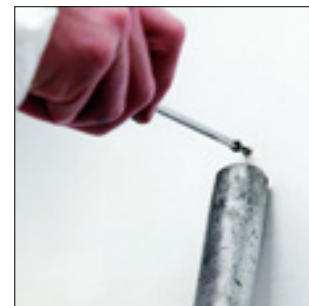
Caution: Brush attachments are difficult to clean properly.

Used as a control measure

- You can use the Type H vacuum cleaner to control asbestos fibres 'at source', eg:
 - Shadow vacuuming - hold the nozzle close to the task, eg screw removal.
 - Local extraction - Extract dust at the cutting point, enclose the tool i.e. drill bit and attach the nozzle.



Type H vacuum cleaner



Shadow vacuuming



Using a plastic enclosure with a Type H vacuum cleaner

Emptying and cleaning

- Employ an HSE-licensed contractor with the right facilities to clean inside or empty a Type H vacuum cleaner. Never do this yourself.
- After each use, clean the vacuum cleaner's outer casing and attachments with the vacuum and then with wet rags.
- Make sure they have been cleaned properly. Inspect the case, hose and attachments visually.
- Keep the hose and attachments in a labelled plastic sack.
- Replace the sealing cap over the hose opening in the cleaner's casing.

Caution: You, and other people, will be exposed to high levels of asbestos fibres if you fail to take the proper precautions.

Further information

- Standard for Type H vacuum cleaners: 'Safety of electrical motor-operated and commercial cleaning appliances. Particular requirements.
- Specification for vacuum cleaners, wet and/or dry. Specification for type H industrial vacuum cleaners for dusts hazardous to health BS EN 5415 2.2 Supplement No.1 1986'.

Useful links

- HSE priced and free publications are available from HSE Books
Tel: 01787 881165 Website: www.hsebooks.co.uk.
- British Standards are available from BSI Customer Services, 389 Chiswick High Road, London W4 4AL Tel: 020 8996 9001 Fax: 020 8996 7001
e-mail: cservices@bsi-global.com Website: www.bsi-global.com.
- For information on plastic enclosure suppliers contact:
 - Asbestos Removal Contractors Association (ARCA) Website: www.arcaweb.org.uk
 - Asbestos Control and Abatement Division (ACAD) Website: www.tica-acad.co.uk
 - HSE's Infoline Tel: 0845 345 0055 Textphone: 0845 408 9577
e-mail: hse.infoline@natbrit.com.

This document is available at www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos.htm

© *Crown copyright* This publication may be freely reproduced, except for advertising, endorsement or commercial purposes. First published as part of *Asbestos Essentials Task Manual* 2001. Please acknowledge the source as HSE.

Published by the Health and Safety Executive 09/06

This guidance is issued by the Health and Safety Executive. Following the guidance is not compulsory and you are free to take other action. But if you do follow the guidance you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. Health and safety inspectors seek to secure compliance with the law and may refer to this guidance as illustrating good practice.