

Council Housing Management Service

Asbestos in your home

This leaflet provides information about what asbestos is, potential areas that it can be found and what to do if you may have found asbestos in your home.

What is asbestos?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral that was a popular building material used widely in the construction industry up until the year 1999, when regulations were introduced to restrict its usage in new buildings.

Homes built between the 1950's and the 1980's are most likely to contain some form of asbestos material. Asbestos was used in buildings because it's a great electrical insulator, it has high mechanical strength, it's resistant to most chemicals and it's an excellent thermal, fire and sound insulator.

If asbestos is in good condition and it's not disturbed or damaged, there is little to no risk of damage to health. However, if it is disturbed or damaged, it can become dangerous – asbestos fibres are released into the air and you may breathe them in.

As all asbestos products were banned from the construction usage in the year 1999, it's highly unlikely that any home built after this date will contain asbestos.

Asbestos has previously been widely used in both building materials and household products.

Some of the areas below are where it can potentially be found:

- Textured coatings applied to ceilings and walls – known commonly as Artex coatings
- Cold-water toilet cisterns
- Vinyl flooring, floor tiles and adhesives
- Insulating boarding panels to boxwork in kitchen and bathrooms
- Panels to external shed roofs and walls
- Panels underneath staircases
- Rainwater downpipes
- Panels to roof soffits and fascias
- Gas flue pipes and toilet waste pipes
- Panels above windows and doors



Some frequently asked questions

What should I do if I may have discovered an asbestos containing material (ACM)?

Don't panic. If you believe that you have discovered an ACM, please contact us on **0300 123 8123** or via our website where a member of staff will advise of the steps we can take to ensure it is dealt with in the correct way.

Visit: cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

What if I want to carry out some DIY to my home?

It is recommended that you read this leaflet carefully before carrying out any decorating or DIY. Asbestos may be present in your home in some of the materials listed above. Asbestos should not be sanded, drilled into, rubbed down or disturbed by any other method. If you have any questions, please contact us.

Should I remove asbestos?

No, removing asbestos containing materials can be hazardous to your health and should only be carried out by professionally trained contractors. We can arrange for skilled contractors to attend and remove or make safe any asbestos containing materials if they are damaged or in poor condition.

How are we making your home asbestos safe?

In order to comply with up-to-date legislation, we have carried out asbestos surveys to the communal areas in nondomestic properties and we inspect these on an annual basis.

We also carry out asbestos surveys to your home prior to intrusive repair works or any refurbishment works due to take place.

This information is then stored on our system and we also continue to add to our asbestos data by carrying out asbestos survey programmes on a regular basis.

If you are worried about asbestos in your home, please contact the Council.

Contact us on tel: **0300 123 7724**

Accessing Cheshire West and Chester Council information and services

Council information is also available in audio, Braille, large print or other formats. If you would like information in another format or language, including British Sign Language, please email us at: equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

You can also telephone: **0300 123 8 123**
or textphone: **18001 0300 123 8 123**
website: www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk