

Purpose

To provide apprentices with guidelines when working near asbestos.

Scope

Electrical Group Training (EGT) workers are not permitted to work on Asbestos or ACM (Asbestos Containing Materials) . If a worker is unsure if they have been potentially exposed to Asbestos or ACM, they should stop work and immediately contact their Field Officer or the WHS Team. If an Apprentice is working near Asbestos or ACM, follow guidelines below.

Definitions

Asbestos is defined in the “Code of practice - how to manage and control asbestos in the workplace” as “*fibrous form of mineral silicates belonging to the serpentine & amphibole groups of rock-forming minerals, including actinolite, amosite (brown asbestos), anthophyllite, chrysotile (white asbestos), crocidolite (blue asbestos), tremolite, or any mixture containing one or more of the mineral silicates belonging to the serpentine and amphibole groups.*”

Working Near Asbestos Guidelines

Where one of the above forms is identified in a workplace it must be reported using the hazard report form, and an assessment of the risks arising from working in that area shall be conducted immediately. When Hazard report is raised, contact must be made with Apprentices Field Officer as soon as possible.

If it is likely that working near asbestos may result in damage causing the release of fibres, the work must not proceed.

Removal of Asbestos

Regulation 464 WHS Regulations 2022, requires a licenced asbestos removalist prepares an asbestos removal plan before any works commence.

Regulations 291 (d) WHS Regulations 2022 identifies asbestos removal as High-Risk works and requires a Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) be developed

An Asbestos Removal Plan must be provided by a Licenced Asbestos Removalist and must include:

- Details of how the Asbestos removal will be carried out, including the method to be used and the tools, equipment, and personal equipment to be used.
- Details of the Asbestos to be removed, including the location, type, and condition of the Asbestos.

Disposal and laundered contaminated protective clothing:

If working in an area of identified Asbestos Containing Material (ACM), disposable coveralls should be used as protective clothing unless it is not reasonably practicable to do so. These can be disposed of with Asbestos Waste, this is also applicable to gloves worn.

For non-disposable clothing these can be washed at a laundry equipped to launder asbestos-contaminated items in a dedicated washing machine. If not possible to launder clothing, it must be bagged in a heavy-duty bag (minimum 200um) and disposed of as Asbestos waste. Contaminated clothing must not be re-worn.

Further information on asbestos requirements, responsibilities and suitable respiratory protection for higher risk work can be found in Work Health and Safety (General) Regulations 2022 Part 8.3 Management of asbestos and associated risks and the Code of Practice for the Safe Removal of Asbestos and AS/NZS1715 & AS/NZS1716.

Reference Documents

- WHS Act 2020 (WA)
- Work Health and Safety (General) Regulations 2022 (WA)
- Code of Practice How to manage and control asbestos in the workplace (WA)
- Code of Practice How to safely remove asbestos (WA)
- AS/NZS1715
- AS/NZS1716