

1. Introduction

Review

Asbestos was used extensively in building materials throughout the UK. Although much of this material has been removed, it is estimated that there are thousands of tonnes in up to 1.5 million buildings, still remaining in situ.

Due to its unique properties, asbestos has been used in many applications. Some of these are well known. For example, it has very good insulation properties and used to be the first choice for lagging pipe-work in boiler-houses. It has been widely used in the construction industry and was used in some building materials as late as 1999. It can be found throughout buildings and may be discovered and uncovered in unexpected as well as expected places. A major concern is that in many cases, it will not look like the soft fibrous material normally associated with the material and has commonly been used in seemingly innocuous substances like paint, plaster, ceiling rain-water goods and floor tiles. A common use is in the form of cement board, which can be used in sheets. Asbestos cement board may also be found in items of equipment.

It should be noted that the presence of asbestos within buildings in itself is not a health hazard and while the asbestos containing materials remain in good condition, they pose no risk; however, it must be emphasised that it has the potential to cause **critical disease** if they are not properly managed.

Asbestos is the biggest occupational health problem ever encountered in the UK and it is a problem that is set to get worse. The long latency period of asbestos related disease means that positive action taken now to reduce the effect of this killer disease will not be realised for some time. We have to take positive action now to prevent future casualties.

To do nothing is not an option!

Asbestos related legislation has tended to deal with situations where **it is known** that asbestos is present in the working environment. Recent changes in legislation has tightened and refocused the existing **Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 1987** to make it more clear that they apply to **any** worker likely to be exposed to asbestos.

Failure of legislation

The legislation has been less successful in controlling the risk to workers who carry out work whilst **unknowingly** being exposed to asbestos because no-one is effectively addressing that risk.

How that risk is managed is crucial to minimise the chance that people are harmed.

2. Risk Management

Resources

Establishments will have a choice of options if it is assessed that there is a risk of exposure. The services of City Council departments (UD, City Laboratories etc) may be used to give advice or to carry out work. The managers of the premises, may have the facilities to commission their own competent contractors or consultants for that advice or work. **It is likely that charges will be made for the services provided including those provided by City Council departments**

Legislation

It is the duty of the **employer**¹ to ensure that no one, in their sphere of influence, is exposed to hazards that may affect their **health, safety & welfare**². The possibility of coming into contact with asbestos is a foreseeable hazard when any City Council employee or **contractor**³ comes onto site to carry out **work**⁴.

Work involving (or possibly involving) asbestos is covered by legislation.

It is extremely important that before any **work** begins in your premises which involves demolishing, drilling or otherwise disturbing the building structure, that

¹ See definitions appendix 1

² Health & Safety at Work Act 1974

³ See definitions appendix 1

you and the employee and/or **contractor** are certain about the nature of the materials that may be exposed. Even if **asbestos cement board** is broken, drilled or filed, fibres of asbestos can be released into the air.

If you are unsure about anything that you see while work is taking place on your premises that gives you cause to suspect that asbestos may have been exposed, you should contact your department safety officer⁵ for advice.

Legislation now impacts on the way operations involving repairs, refurbishment and new installations within premises are carried out. The major change to existing rules is that all **employers** '*will need to make an assessment as to whether asbestos is, or is likely to be present in the premises.*' The guideline from the Health & Safety Executive is that **asbestos is present unless you can demonstrate that it is not.**

To enable a suitable and sufficient assessment to be made, asbestos surveys are being commissioned of all properties owned and managed by the Council to identify the presence of asbestos. For other properties the Council will discuss with the building owners how best this might be managed. The survey will be in the form of a visual examination of those parts of the premises that are reasonably accessible and will take account of where asbestos is likely to be found. The results of the survey will be incorporated into a '**building register**' which will form a complete record of the survey findings and will include drawings and photographs identifying where and what type of asbestos, if any, has been found. **Until this programme has started it is important that any records of surveys are kept so that the information can be incorporated into the register.** It is intended that this information will also be recorded electronically in a database so that establishments will be able to access the information easily. Due to the scale of the project, the survey will be phased over a period of time. This phasing will probably mean that necessary maintenance or new installation work on the structure of buildings will be needed before the asbestos survey has been completed. Unless it can be proven that

⁴ See definitions appendix 1

⁵ John Gavin(North), Rob Whiskens (Central), David Steele(South)

the structure is asbestos free, the prudent approach will be to have an asbestos survey carried out, before the work starts and to enter the results in the **building register**. The **employer** must hold a copy of the **building register**, including the results of the asbestos survey, on-site. It must be made available to **anyone** undertaking work so that they can satisfy themselves that asbestos is not present in the area that they are to carry out the work. It will be the responsibility of the **employer to ensure that any sub-contractor working for the main or principal contractor is aware of the survey. It will be in the interest of the employer to be able to demonstrate that this has been done.** The initial survey will be reviewed annually to ensure that the condition of the asbestos has not deteriorated and to enable a decision to be made regarding the feasibility of removing it.

Any work carried out, which involves working on or removing asbestos, between the formal reviews, must be entered into the register held on site and transferred to the centrally held register at the time of the next formal review.

The legislation requiring the Health & Safety Executive to be given 14 days notice, before commencing asbestos disposal work, still remains in place. Asbestos can only be removed from site by an approved licensed contractor and taken to an approved disposal site. It is an offence for anyone else to remove it.

The use of asbestos in building materials was not prohibited until 1999 and so it may be encountered in fairly modern buildings as well as older establishments.

3. Safety/Trade Union Representatives Consultation Arrangements

The Safety Representatives and Safety Committee Regulations 1977 require employers to consult with safety representatives with a view to formulating arrangements to ensure the health & safety of employees at work.

Throughout this Asbestos guidance, reference is made to each occasion where such consultation is to take place. It is important that this guidance is adhered to so that safety representatives have sufficient involvement and adequate information in order to allow them to effectively represent their members' interests. However, it may be

that some establishments do not have a nominated safety representative and in such instances, the appropriate trade union/staff representative must be consulted.

Policy for Work Possibly Involving Asbestos Containing Materials within Educational Establishments.

Section A - Planned Work⁶

In the event of maintenance, remedial, or refurbishment work being required, the person in control of the work, the employer, must ensure that a suitable and sufficient specification is drawn up. This will include details about known asbestos and the specification must also make clear, where appropriate, that it is not known if asbestos is present or not. The detailed specification will be compiled by a competent person following consultation with the employer.

City Council departments such as Urban Design (UD) can provide a service, however there are alternative sources. Once the specification has been drawn up an appropriate contractor will be selected.

The **employer**, when considering any improvement/repair work where it is reasonably foreseeable that materials of an unknown nature or materials which could contain asbestos, may be encountered, may involve the UD Area Building Surveyor/Engineer, **before** any work commences so that the nature of the materials can be determined.

No work will commence until a written assessment of the work method has been provided to and agreed by the **employer**. Unless the **employer** is competent enough to determine that the work method statement is sufficient, he will take expert advice to ensure that it is. Management representatives must be notified of the presence of asbestos containing materials by the Manager/ Supervisor and kept informed of developments at each stage.

⁶ see Appendix 4

All Works

All works must be carried out in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, 1974, and all works involving asbestos must comply with The Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 1987, current amendments to the Regulations and the associated **Health and Safety Executive Codes of Practice and Guidance Notes**⁷

Only contractors licensed with the Health and Safety Executive for the removal of asbestos who also appear on the City Council list of approved contractors may be employed to remove asbestos from the site.

The written assessment of the work method and means of disposal, submitted by the contractor to the **employer** before work commences will include the following:-

- a) Place of work activity
- b) Type of work
- c) Identification of the type of asbestos
- d) The steps to be taken to control exposure and the release of asbestos fibres into the environment including the results of appropriate reassurance testing
- e) In the case of demolition, where reasonably practicable, procedures for asbestos materials to be removed from the structure before demolition begins.
- f) Procedures for dealing with the accidental release of asbestos fibres into the atmosphere.
- g) Procedures for the removal of waste from the workplace.
- h) Final destination of waste material.

⁷ see appendix 2

i) Air testing

All contractors **must** be instructed to report to the **employer** or the employer's nominated representative on arrival at the establishment. The contractor will then inform the **employer** of the name of the contractor's senior person on site and will make arrangements for regular progress meetings to take place between the senior person, the **employer** or their nominated representative, and the Safety/Trade Union/Staff Representative.

At the end of the planned work the area will be thoroughly cleaned by the contractor and then inspected and air tested by a qualified occupational hygienist.

Airborne fibre counts will be made by the optical microscopy technique, in accordance with H.S.E. Guidance Note EH10 and MDHS 39/3 by a laboratory accredited by the National Measurement Accreditation Scheme, (NAMAS) participating in the Regular Inter-Laboratory Counting Scheme (RICE).

If the clearance inspection is satisfactory and the airborne fibre count averages less than 0.01 fibres per millilitre of air, a copy of the clearance certificate will be issued to the **employer** or their nominated representative, and control of the area handed back.

A copy of the clearance certificate must be given to the management agents and the Safety/Trade Union/Staff Representative and the Building Services Supervisor. This certificate should be retained by the Manager/ Supervisor in the Building Register.

Where readings are found to be over 0.01 fibres per millilitre of air, the area affected is to remain closed whilst it is re-cleaned. The area will then be inspected and air tested again and the process repeated until the fibre count averages less than 0.01 fibres per millilitre of air.

Once the clearance inspection is satisfactory and the airborne fibre count averages

less than 0.01 fibres per millilitre of air, a copy of the clearance certificate will be issued to the **employer** or their nominated representative and control of the area handed back.

A copy of the clearance certificate must be given management agents and the Safety/Trade Union/Staff Representatives and Building Services Supervisor.

Where areas continue to show elevated fibre levels, air samples will be analysed by electron microscopy in order to identify asbestos fibres conclusively. Where the result of the electron microscopy shows that the area is free from contamination by asbestos fibres, a clearance certificate will be issued by the occupational hygienist to the **employer** or their representative. A copy of the certificate will be retained by the **employer**.

A copy of the clearance certificate must be given to the management agents and Safety/Trade Union/Staff Representatives and the Building Services Supervisor.

Section B - Emergency Work⁸

On discovering damaged or friable material within the fabric of the building which it is conceivable could contain asbestos, the Manager/ Head Teacher or his nominated representative must take the following action in consultation with the Safety/Trade Union/Staff Representative:

Evacuate the area and if possible lock off and erect notices prohibiting access. If the suspect material is in a corridor it will be necessary to evacuate all the rooms served by the corridor.

Ring your Area Building Surveyor⁹ and your Safety Officer The Area Building Surveyor will visit the establishment as soon as possible, and in any event within 24 hours. The Area Building Surveyor will give appropriate advice.

⁸ See Appendix 5

⁹ see Appendix3

If the composition of the material is unknown, it must be sampled and analysed for asbestos content. The area will remain closed until the results are obtained.

If the result obtained shows that the material does **not** contain asbestos, the Manager / Head Teacher will then inform the Safety/Trade Union/Staff Representative and the Building Services Supervisor, and allow the area to be taken back into use.

If the material is immediately recognised as asbestos, or the results of tests confirm the presence of asbestos, the Manager/ Head Teacher will make arrangements for its safe removal/disposal..

Materials which have only minor damage may have their surfaces temporarily encapsulated to prevent the release of any fibres, with further repairs or removal as necessary being carried out at a later date. Advice regarding appropriate techniques are given in HSE guidance note HS(G)210¹⁰

When it is necessary to remove the material, the removal work will be carried out under controlled conditions by a City Council approved contractor specialising in asbestos removal and licensed with the Health and Safety Executive for the removal of asbestos in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, 1974. All works will comply with The Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 1987, current amendments to the Regulations and the associated Health and Safety Executive Codes of Practice and Guidance Notes¹¹.

All contractors **must** be instructed to report to the Manager/ Head Teacher or their nominated representative on arrival at the establishment. The contractor will then inform them of the name of the senior person on-site and will make arrangements for regular progress meetings to take place between the contractor's senior person, the Manager/ Head-teacher or their nominated representative, and the Safety/Trade Union/Staff Representative.

¹⁰ see Appendix 2

¹¹ see Appendix2

In all instances following encapsulation or removal, the area will be thoroughly cleaned by the contractor and then inspected and air tested by a qualified occupational hygienist.

Airborne fibre counts will be made by the optical microscopy technique in accordance with H.S.E. Guidance Note EH10 and MDHS 39/3 by a laboratory accredited by the National Measurement Accreditation Scheme (NAMAS) participating in the Regular Inter-Laboratory Counting Scheme (RICE)

If the clearance inspection is satisfactory and the airborne fibre count averages less than 0.01 fibres per millilitre of air, a copy of the clearance certificate will be issued to the/Manager/ Head Teacher or their nominated representative, and control of the area handed back.

The Manager will keep available a copy of the clearance certificate for inspection by the Safety/Trade Union/Staff Representatives, the Building Services Supervisor representatives of the Council and Health & Safety Executive.

Where readings are found to be over 0.01 fibres per millilitre of air, the area affected is to remain closed whilst it is re-cleaned. The area will then be inspected and air tested again and the process repeated until the fibre count averages less than 0.01 fibres per millilitre of air.

Once the clearance inspection is satisfactory and the airborne fibre count averages less than 0.01 fibres per millilitre of air, a copy of the clearance certificate will be issued to the Manager/ Head Teacher or their nominated representative, and control of the area handed back.

Where areas continue to show elevated fibre levels, air samples will be analysed by electron microscopy in order to identify asbestos fibres conclusively. Where the result of the electron microscopy shows that the area is free from contamination by asbestos fibres, a clearance certificate will be issued by the occupational hygienist to

the Manager or their nominated representative. The Manager will keep available a copy of the clearance certificate for the Safety/Trade Union/Staff Representatives, the Building Services Supervisor, representatives of the Council and the Health & Safety Executive.

Appendix 1

Definitions

Contractor - Any person that is not a direct employee of the establishment. This will include for example: - window cleaners, electricians, cable installers, workmen employed by UD, builders and voluntary workers (parents, teachers etc) that will be carrying out work on the premises.

Employer- Any person having the authority to commission and/or authorise work to be carried out.

Work- Any activity involving drilling, filing, sawing, cutting, hammering, carrying, lifting, pushing, pulling, dismantling, removing etc. (this list is by no means exhaustive.)

APPENDIX 2

The following relevant Health and Safety Executive Approved Codes of Practice and Guidance Notes must be adhered to when carrying out work involving asbestos containing materials:

Codes of Practice

COP3 Work with asbestos insulation, asbestos coating and asbestos insulation board. Revised 1988.

COP21 The control of asbestos at work: the control of asbestos regulations, 1987.

Guidance Notes

EH10 Asbestos: exposure limits and measurement of airborne dust concentrations, Revised 1990.

EH35 Probable asbestos dust concentrations at construction processes.

EH52 Removal techniques and associated waste handling for asbestos insulation coatings and insulation board.

MDHS39/3 Asbestos fibres in air: light microscope methods for use with the control of asbestos at work regulations.

HS(G)189/2 Work with asbestos cement.

HS(G) 210 Asbestos essentials task manual-task guidance sheets for building maintenance and allied trades

This guidance note gives practical advice on how to carry out 25 common work tasks where asbestos is or may be expected to be present.

Before attempting to carry out the tasks listed, please seek advice from your Safety Officer

- A1 Drilling holes in asbestos insulating board (AIB)
- A2 Removal of a single asbestos insulating board ceiling tile
- A3 Removal of a door with asbestos insulating board fireproofing
- A4 Removal of a single screwed-in asbestos insulating board under 1m² in area
- A5 Cleaning light fittings attached to asbestos insulating board
- A6 Repairing damage to asbestos insulating board
- A7 Painting undamaged asbestos insulating board
- A8 Enclosing undamaged asbestos insulating board
- A9 Drilling holes in asbestos cement and other highly bonded materials
- A10 Cleaning debris from guttering on an asbestos cement roof.
- A11 Removal of asbestos cement debris
- A12 Cleaning weathered asbestos cement roofing and cladding.
- A13 Repairing damaged asbestos cement
- A14 Removal of asbestos cement sheets, guttering, etc.
- A15 Removal of asbestos cement products such as flues and tanks.
- A16 Painting asbestos cement sheets.
- A17 Removal of asbestos paper linings.
- A18 Removal of asbestos friction linings.
- A19 Removal of asbestos fire blankets.

A20 Laying cables in areas containing undamaged asbestos materials

A21 Removal of asbestos-containing bituminous products

A22 Removal of metal cladding lined with asbestos containing bitumen (RPM)

A23 Removal of asbestos-containing floor tiles

A24 Removal of flexible asbestos textile duct connectors

A25 Removal of compressed asbestos fibre gaskets and asbestos rope seals

HS(G) 213 Introduction to asbestos essentials-comprehensive guidance on working with asbestos in building and maintenance and allied trades.

MDHS 100 Surveying, sampling and assessment of asbestos containing materials.

The above publications can be purchased from

**HSE Books
PO Box 1999
Sudbury
Suffolk
CO10 6FS**

APPENDIX 3**Asbestos Liaison(Urban Design)**

David Brazier 303 7311

Area Building Surveyors

Alan Maylott	303 6688
Andy Stone	303 7361
Peter Tilley	303 7303
Dave Holtham	303 7242
Stan Taylor	303 6470
Peter Greaves	303 7541
Phil Morris	303 6386
Bob Keegan	303 6482

Engineers**Electrical**

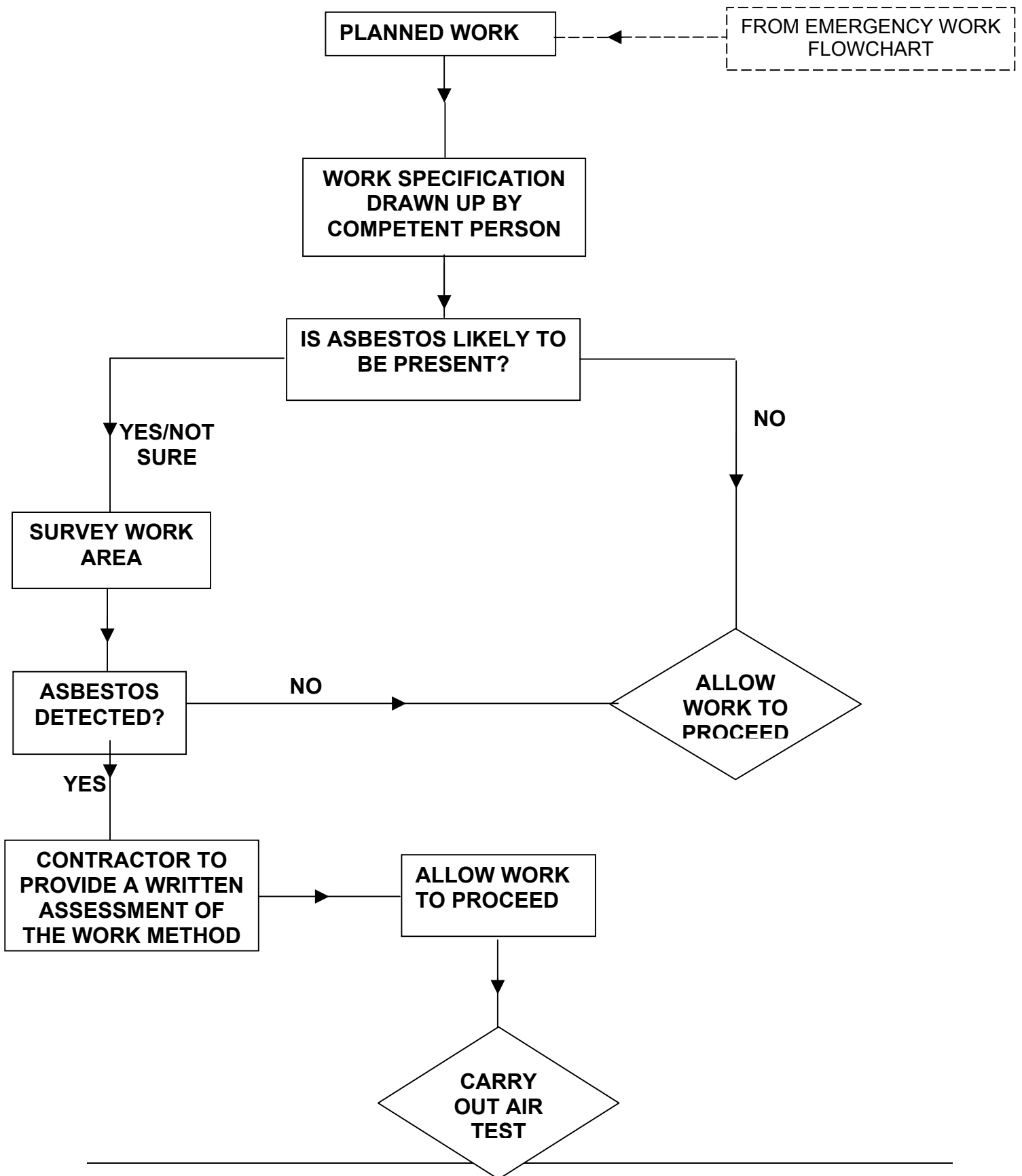
Paul Dunn	303 6396
Lance Boyce	303 6442
Mark Jeffers	303 6442
Jonathon Brackstone	303 6402
Stephen Hall	303 6396
Phillip Tansley	303 6402

Mechanical

Paul Snaddon	303 6473
Derek Osborne	303 6440
Michael Stagg	303 6017
John Brannelly	303 6017
Keith Lomax	303 6473

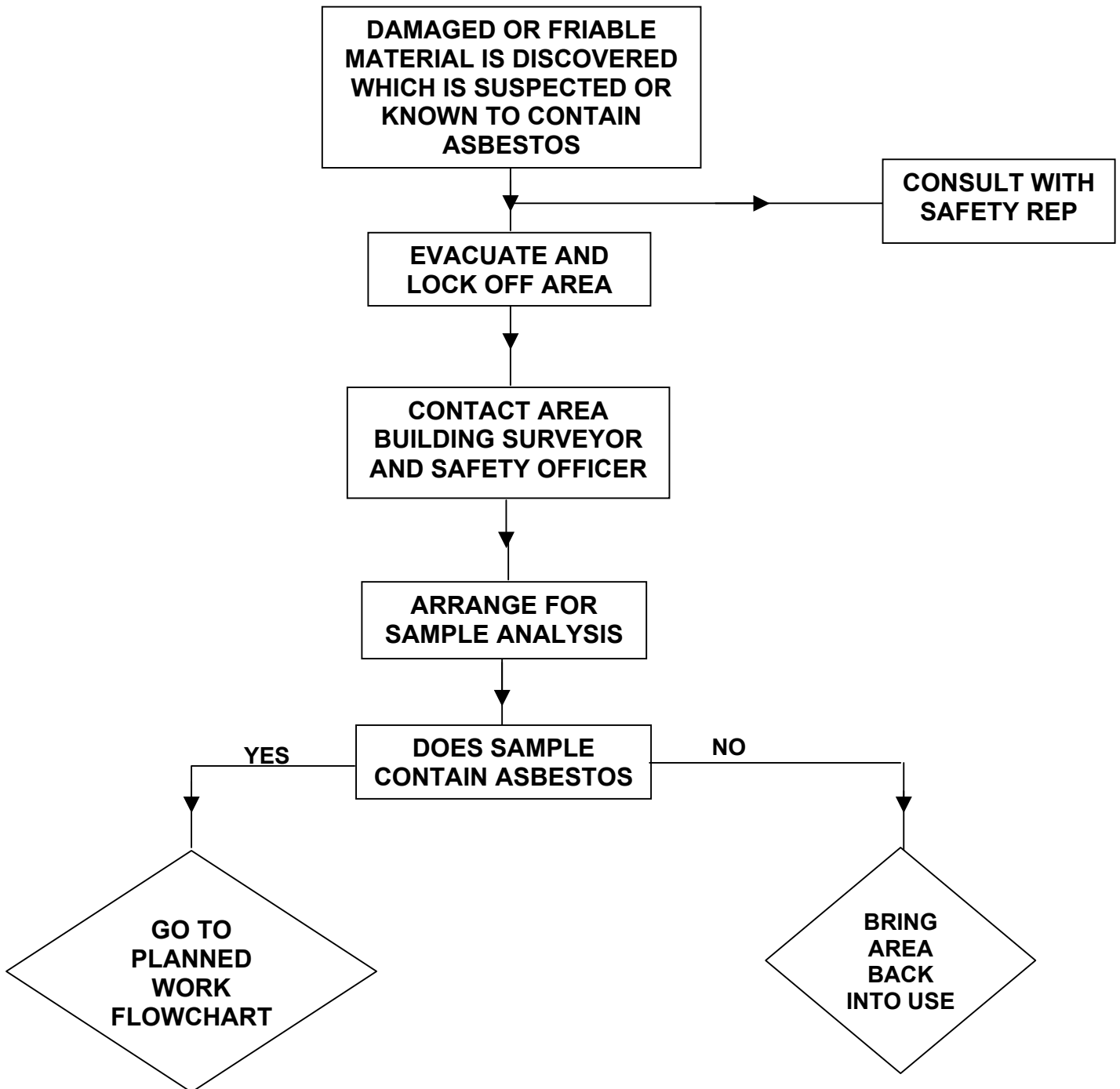
APPENDIX 4

FLOWCHART FOR PLANNED WORK



APPENDIX 5

FLOWCHART FOR EMERGENCY WORK



The Contractor must complete this form before any work commences

Client/Establishment

Address

Telephone No

Location/Area of work Activity

Brief description of work being carried out.

Attach any additional information that may be necessary to fully describe the proposed activity.

Asbestos: Has possible disturbance of asbestos been considered. Yes No

Under no circumstances is work to be started until this question has been answered and where appropriate measures taken to comply with Asbestos Safety Legislation

When do you expect work to commence? Date Time When

do you expect work to end? Date Time

Hours of work From To

Are the Construction(Design & Management) Regulations(CDM) applicable Yes No

(i.e. Any demolition work or work lasting 30 days or 500 person hours or more than 5 persons on site at any time)

I confirm that I have seen the asbestos survey relevant to the work to be done and will take appropriate measures to comply with he Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations and amendments

Signature of Contractor/Contractor's Appointed PersonDate.....

Name of appointed person responsible for safety /liaison with contractors on-site.

Name Position

Name of Principal contractor's Site Manager/Supervisor

Name Position