



HOUSING REPAIRS

**ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT
POLICY**

1. POLICY AIMS

- 1.1 As set out in the Health and Safety Policy Statement of the Housing & Property Service, we will seek to comply fully with the general requirements of the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006.
- 1.2 The Housing & Property Service recognises the health risks associated with breathing in air contaminated with asbestos dust/fibres. They will seek to ensure as far as is reasonably practicable that all employees, clients, contractors and the general public who are using premises managed by the Housing & Property Service are not at risk from exposure to asbestos. The arrangements will take account of legislative requirements, codes of practice and other guidance produced by the Health and Safety Executive and by the Council's Health and Safety Team.

2 LEGISLATION

- 2.1 The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 requires employers to prevent exposure of employees to asbestos. If this is not reasonably practical the law says that exposure should be controlled to the lowest possible level. Before any work with asbestos is carried out, the Regulations require employers to make an assessment of the likely exposure to asbestos dust. If contractors are employed, employers must make sure that either the work will not lead to asbestos exposure or that the contractor has carried out an assessment and identified work practices to reduce exposures. These Regulations only apply to non-domestic premises and the common parts of domestic premises e.g. stairwells, lift shafts and corridors in blocks of flats.
- 2.2 The Asbestos (Licensing) Regulations 1983 require that a contractor doing more than one hour's work a week with asbestos insulation, asbestos coating or asbestos insulating board and not over two hours on a single job must hold a licence issued by the Health and Safety Executive. However in view of high exposures with this type of work, HSE recommends that a licensed contractor is used for prolonged work involving material containing asbestos.
- 2.3 The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 require the client to provide the CDM Co-ordinator with information about the project that is relevant to health and safety. The information might, for example include previous surveys of the building for asbestos.
- 2.4 The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires the employer to protect the health and safety of people who might be affected by the operation of the business whether they work for the employer or not.

- 2.5 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 requires the employer to assess risks to the health and safety of employees and others who might visit the premises.
- 2.6 The Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996 require that suitable warning signs are put in place if there is no other appropriate preventative or protective measures

3. ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT

- 3.1 The Housing Health and Safety Policy Statement sets out the responsibilities of key housing personnel accountable to the Director of Housing and Property for all health and safety issues but the following identifies responsibilities that relate specifically to asbestos management:

The Director of Housing and Property has overall responsibility for managing all aspects of asbestos management within the Housing Service. This includes the provision of adequate financial and human resources to ensure so far as reasonably practical that asbestos is controlled and managed in compliance with the legislation defined above. He will identify specific responsibilities to the Head of Head of Construction, Maintenance Manager, Business Support Manager and Area Housing and Property Managers

- **The Head of Housing** will ensure that the asbestos management policy and operational procedures are kept up to date with any legislative or good practice changes and communicated to all staff involved with the management of asbestos.
- **The Head of Business Support** will ensure that IT facilities are in place to maintain an asbestos register that records the presence of asbestos in all domestic premises owned or managed by Housing and Property Services.
- **The Maintenance Manager** will be responsible for appointing and managing the Asbestos Co-ordinator. He will ensure that appropriate risk assessment procedures are in place and that operational procedures are followed where asbestos is present. This will apply to all building maintenance work carried out by the in-house workforce or its sub contractors. He will also be responsible for ensuring that all staff receive training on dealing with asbestos that is relevant to their duties and that a training record is maintained.
- **Area Housing and Property Managers** will be responsible on a day to day basis for decisions relating to asbestos management for all properties in their area that are owned or managed by Housing and Property Services and any communication with tenants. They

will also ensure that staff in their Area are aware of any changes in legislation and procedures relating to asbestos management.

- **Assistant Area Housing Managers and Principal Housing Officers** will be responsible for decisions relating to asbestos management and communication with tenants in the absence of the Area Housing and Property Manager;
- **The Housing and Property Service Asbestos Co-ordinator** will be responsible for maintaining the asbestos register. He will provide advice to Council staff and contractors on any incidents of suspected asbestos in domestic properties owned or managed by Housing and Property Services including carrying out a risk assessment. He will liaise with the Council's Property Risk Management Officer regarding notification to the Health and Safety Executive of any incidents that require to be reported and will inform the Head of Housing of such incidents and action taken. He will make recommendations on appropriate remedial action and liaise with the Area Housing and Property Manager on communication to tenants. He will liaise with the Health and Safety Manager and the Property Risk Management Officer in relation to legislative or regulatory changes and advise the Head of Housing and Maintenance Manager of these changes.
- The **Head of Construction** will ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for testing for and removing/sealing asbestos in any planned maintenance or capital works contracts that are managed by Housing and Property Services and involve the refurbishment or maintenance of properties owned or managed by Housing and Property Services. He will ensure that the Housing Service Asbestos Co-ordinator and the Area Housing Manager are informed of any asbestos found in premises and proposed remedial action.
- **Contractors** will be required to comply with the terms of method statements submitted to the Maintenance Manager or Head of Construction. These should cover the assessment of risks related to suspected asbestos and approved methods of minimising risk.
- **All employees of Housing and Property Services** are responsible for advising the Asbestos Co-ordinator if they suspect that asbestos may be present in properties owned or managed by Housing and Property Services.

4. OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

- 4.1 Procedures have been prepared for the management of asbestos in premises owned or managed by the Housing Service.
- 4.2 All operational procedures will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Housing and Property Management Team and the Asbestos Co-ordinator

5. TRAINING AND INFORMATION

- 5.1 The Housing Service Asbestos Co-ordinator has a qualification from the British Occupational Hygiene Society in Building Surveys and Bulk Sampling for Asbestos.
- 5.2 All Housing & Property staff who visit or are involved in managing houses or properties owned or managed by the Housing Service will attend asbestos awareness training.
- 5.3 Regular refresher training will be provided for all staff and this will include information about new legislation or regulations.
- 5.4 All staff that carry out risk assessments will be trained so that they are competent to carry out this task.
- 5.5 Appropriate training will be arranged by the Head of Construction for staff involved in refurbishment or maintenance contracts for the Housing Service.
- 5.6 Records of staff training will be maintained by Housing and Property Services.
- 5.7 The Asbestos Co-ordinator will hold copies of relevant legislation, regulations and Health and Safety Guidance on managing asbestos.
- 5.8 Members of staff will be provided with advice and guidance on asbestos that is relevant to their duties.
- 5.9 A Home Safety leaflet will be issued to all new tenants and made available in Housing Offices and Service Points. This includes some basic awareness information about asbestos. An asbestos advice leaflet is also available for tenants.

6. MONITORING

- 6.1 Once the database is completed, the Asbestos Co-ordinator will set up a programme of regular monitoring of a sample of properties where asbestos is known to exist but is in an undisturbed condition.

- 6.2 The Asbestos Co-ordinator will submit quarterly reports to the Maintenance Manager and the Director of Housing & Property on:
- Number of properties where asbestos has been identified through day to day or void repairs and details of action taken
 - Number of properties notified to HSE
 - Cost of asbestos testing and remedial work
- 6.3 The Head of Construction will submit annual reports to the Director of Housing & Property Services on:
- Number of properties where asbestos has been identified through capital or planned maintenance programmes;
 - Number of properties notified to HSE
 - Cost of asbestos testing and remedial work

7. POLICY REVIEW

- 7.1 The Housing Management Team will review this policy annually.

REFERENCES:

Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006
Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007
The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
The Health and Safety (Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996
The Housing & Property Service Health and Safety Policy Statement
The Highland Council Health and Safety Policy on Control of Asbestos
The Highland Council draft guidance notes on the control of asbestos