

a12

asbestos essentials

Non-licensed tasks

Essential information

Important: You must read sheet a0 *Introduction to asbestos essentials*

Also read the following sheets:

em0 Risk assessments and plans of work

em1 What to do if you discover or accidentally disturb asbestos during your work

em2 Information, instruction and training

em6 Personal protective equipment (including RPE)

em7 Using damp rags to clean surfaces of minor asbestos contamination

em8 Personal decontamination

em9 Disposal of asbestos waste

Cleaning weathered asbestos cement (AC) roofing and cladding

What this sheet covers

This sheet describes good practice when you need to clean AC cladding and roofing, either to improve its appearance or to prepare it for a surface coating.

This sheet is *not* appropriate for cleaning asbestos insulating board. Use an HSE-licensed contractor for such work.

Preparing the work area

- Ensure safe access.
- Restrict access – minimise the number of people present.
- Use tape and notices to warn others.

Equipment

- 500-gauge polythene sheeting and duct tape
- Warning tape and notices
- Approved biocide
- Scoop or trowel
- Scraper
- Proprietary cleaning machine
- Garden-type sprayer containing wetting agent
- Bucket of water and rags
- Asbestos waste bag
- Clear polythene bag



Moss and lichen growth on AC roofing and gutters

Caution

AC roofs are always fragile and cannot bear weight.

Caution

It is dangerous to seal over exhaust vents from gas-fired equipment. Can the equipment be turned off?

Other hazards

Work at height – see www.hse.gov.uk/work-at-height. Take precautions to avoid falls.

Work on fragile roofs – see www.hse.gov.uk/construction. Fragile roofs cannot bear weight.

There may be other hazards – you need to consider them all.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) – see sheet em6

- Provide:
 - disposable overalls fitted with a hood (you may need waterproof overalls);
 - boots without laces (laced boots are hard to decontaminate);
 - protective gloves. Select single use gloves;
 - a disposable particulate respirator (eg FF P3) for manual scraping and for operating the filtration system.
- A respirator is not normally needed for an operator who is well away from the cleaning machine.

Procedure

- Prevent slurry entering the building. Seal gaps into the building with polythene sheeting, secured with duct tape.
- If necessary, remove debris first – see sheet a11.
- Only in exceptional circumstances is high-pressure jetting appropriate. This requires a specialist contractor.

Method 1: Cleaning cladding accessible from ground level

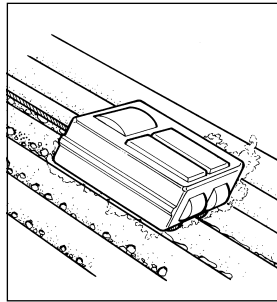
- Prepare the biocide according to the instructions on the label. Apply it by low-pressure sprayer.
- Allow time for the biocide to work – check the product label.
- Keep the surface wet and remove growths by gentle scraping. Dead plant roots are hard to remove – leave these in place.
- Scoop debris into the asbestos waste bag.

Method 2: Employ a specialist roof cleaning contractor with a cleaning machine

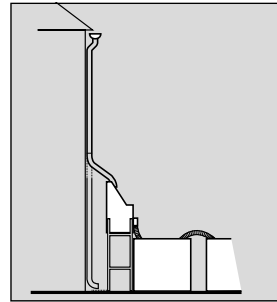
- This method creates a lot of slurry that must be collected for disposal.
- The contractor should:
 - divert the slurry through a collection and filtration system;
 - keep solid waste wet and put it in the waste bag;
 - flush out the slurry collector with clean water.

Cleaning and disposal

- Clean the equipment and the area with damp rags.
- Put debris, used rags, polythene sheeting, paintbrush and other waste in the asbestos waste bag and tape it closed.
- Put the asbestos waste bag in a clear polythene bag and tape it closed.
- Disposal – see sheet em9.



Cleaning machine



The contractor should use a collection and filter system

Personal decontamination

See sheet em8.

Clearance and checking off

- Visually inspect the area to make sure that it has been cleaned properly.
- Clearance air sampling is not normally required.
- Get the premises owner, dutyholder or client to check off the job.

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